



What is Real Faith?

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Many people lack faith to receive answers to their prayers. This is due largely to the lack of understanding about what faith truly is!

When Jesus Christ spoke about this end time he said, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, *shall he find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:8). Was Jesus wrong? Today there are over two billion Christians on the earth! All of them “believe” on Jesus—they have faith in Christ. How could Jesus make such a statement? Did Jesus get it wrong? Or is it *our* lack of understanding of just what true faith Jesus was speaking of?

Jesus had Faith!

Many people want answers to prayers. Jesus revealed to us how we can get answers to our prayers. Jesus said, “And whatsoever *ye shall ask in my name, that will I do*, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

“If ye shall ask any thing in my name, *I will do it*.

“*IF ye love me, keep my commandments.*” (John 14:13-15). Jesus told his disciples that he would answer their prayers, if they “ask anything” in his name. What most people tend to ignore is the condition, “*IF ye love me, keep my commandments.*” Does keeping the commandments of God mean that this is true faith? If you are in a complete relationship with God, a covenant relationship with him, will he answer your prayers? According to Jesus, YES IT IS!

Jesus had faith! Jesus had “no sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Sin is the transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4). Jesus kept the law perfectly, and had a covenant relationship with the Father, he said, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; *even as I have kept my Father's commandments*, and abide in his love.” (John 15:10). His commandments and the Father's commandments are one and the same.

Jesus had perfect faith. He was in complete harmony with God, and perfect relationship with the father, “*I can of mine own self do nothing*: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but *the will of the Father which hath sent me.*” (John 5:30). John wrote that those who keep his commandments the father dwells in him, “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him” (1 John 3:24). Jesus demonstrates here that he cannot do anything unless he was in perfect harmony with the Father. He said, “...but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (John 14:10). Jesus and the Father worked together and performed incredible works, and miracles. Jesus being without sin and the Father dwelling in him by the agent of the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:12-13). Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure, (John 3:34).

God's law is the Love of God (1 John 5:3). It is this love that is given to us by the Holy Spirit written on our hearts, “...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (Romans 5:5; 2 Corinth 3:3). This is the evidence that one has the spirit of God by the keeping of the law of God.

That same power Jesus promised to his disciples. The early New Testament church performed miracles and wonderful works of God. The disciples were common ordinary men, humble and close to God, had a covenant relationship with him keeping his commandments, and because of

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this they were able to get answers to prayer. God has promised that same power to all that follow and obey him today as well!

Definition of Faith

Many do not realize that faith is keeping the law of God, that it is the work of God! Many preachers believe in faith alone without works, *that anyone trying to obey God is the worst person in the world*. But does the Bible define it in this way? Just believe *without* works? Or is *that man's idea of faith* and God's idea of faith is totally different!

In John the 8th chapter Jesus demonstrates what true faith is, and tells the people that their idea of faith (which dominates popular Christian thinking today) is not faith at all. Jesus said to the "...Jews which believed on him," *"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* (John 8:31, 32). He told them that if they obeyed him then they are truly his disciples, Jesus commands obedience to his word. He said, *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"*

*"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and **doeth them**, I will shew you to whom he is like:*

"He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

*"But he that heareth, and **doeth not**, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:46-49). Who calls him Lord? People who profess to believe on him! These were Jews that "believed" on him, but did they obey Christ? The rest of the chapter shows that they did not!*

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you." (v.37). these were people who believed on him but wanted to kill him because they did not want to obey! They were Christian in name only.

In verse 38 Jesus says, *"I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father."* Who was their father? Jesus spoke of them being a slave to sin and he was there to show them the way to freedom (v.34, 36).

They said, *"...Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." (v.39). What works did Abraham perform? "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." (Gen 26:5). Abraham was obedient to God's laws, these people were not! Jesus was telling them to be obedient like Abraham. Jesus said to "continue in my word." This word was the same as Abraham's "works." Jesus called them sinners (v.34). Abraham kept the law of God, therefore was not doing *his* works but *God's* works. Jesus was telling them to do the same thing, but they were doing the "deeds" (v.41) of the devil instead.*

Jesus continues, *"But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." (v.40). they could not handle the truth of God. These*

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believers even though they believed on Jesus did not want to obey. Instead they wanted to kill Christ because they did not want to be obedient to him. Jesus told them, “Ye do the deeds of your father.” (v.41). Again he points out that they are doing “deeds” or “works” of their father which were not the works of God.

The believers of Christ said, “We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God. “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, *ye would love me*: [1 John 5:3] for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” (vv.41, 42). If God was truly their God they would keep the commandments of God like Abraham but they did not.

Notice who their father truly was, and who they really obeyed, “Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father *ye will do*. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (v.44). they obeyed Satan! These did not have true faith in God. True faith is to obey, the way Abraham obeyed. The deeds they were displaying were their faith in the devil, not God. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, *If a man keep my saying*, he shall never see death.” (v.51). A person must keep the word of God; it is this faith that will bring him everlasting life.

Notice the primary commandment they were breaking because they did not believe Christ, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

“Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I AM.**

“Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.” (vv.56-59). Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus, he knew who Jesus was, Jesus was the great I AM, Yahweh of the Old Testament and Abraham obeyed Yahweh, these people did not, they wanted to stone him, they did not obey this first commandment in the Law of God, “*I am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage [Jesus promised them freedom from the slavery of sin (v.34)].

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (Ex 20:2-3). They were serving a god besides Jesus and that was Satan the devil. Jesus was trying to set them free from him and be obedient to the commandments of God. This whole teaching was Jesus showing them that they were disobeying the great commandment in the law, and that true faith was keeping it, being obedient to God.

Man’s way of faith was just believing without obedience!

James wrote about this, he said, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and *tremble.*” (2:19). Why do they “tremble”? because they don’t obey! Jesus was telling them the same thing, “you believe on me but you don’t obey!”

James goes on to say, “But wilt thou know, *O vain man*, that faith without works is dead?” (v.20). James says that people who do this are “vain.” Jesus said, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; *but their heart is far from me.*

“*But in vain they do worship me*, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.” (Matthew 15:8-9). Worshipping God *their way* and not *God’s way* by his commandments. Christian in name, like the Jews that believed on him, but wanting to do it their way, not God’s way. The

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majority of people worship Jesus in this way, in today's modern world! They worship God in vain, a dead faith.

James says, "Even so faith, if it hath *not works*, is dead, being alone.

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, *and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*" (vv.17-18). A living faith is showing your faith by keeping the Law of God-this is the "works" he was speaking of, notice, "But whoso looketh into *the perfect law of liberty*, and **continueth therein**, he being not a forgetful hearer, but **a doer of the work**, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:25). This is exactly what Jesus told those Jews that believed on him to continue in his word, to obey the law of God. Further proof that James meant the law of God, is that he lists the commandments of God in James 2:8-11, and called it the "law of liberty" in James 2:12. James called the law of God, "liberty." Jesus said he was to set them free, all they had to do is keep the first commandment in the law of God which they did not; they would rather follow their own ways which is sin, and the way of Satan the Devil.

Jesus told his church, "And he that overcometh, and **keepeth my works** unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:" (Rev 2:26). We must keep the works of God, his law, not our works which is sin. The Bible makes that clear distinction in Isaiah, "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and *worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways*: behold, thou art wroth; for *we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.*

"But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all *our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*; and we all do fade as a leaf; *and our iniquities*, like the wind, have taken us away." (64:5-6). Notice "our righteousness" is sin which is breaking God's law, and God's ways is *his* righteousness and if we continue in his ways "we shall be saved." As Jesus told the rich young ruler, "but if thou wilt *enter into life, keep the commandments.*" (Matthew 19:17).

So what is true faith? Today, people just say, "Believe on the Lord" and that is it there is nothing else you must do. Jesus however says he requires obedience to be saved, that is true faith. Those that *just* believe without works, James says, "What *doth it profit*, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?... Even so faith, if it hath *not works*, is dead, being alone" (2:14. 17). It's a dead faith. True and living faith requires obedience to his law, God's works, it demonstrates, it shows to the world *your* faith; "I will shew thee my faith *by my works.*" (v.18). Abraham was, "justified by works," (v.21), because he "obeyed" God and kept his laws (Gen 26:5).

"Was not Abraham our father *justified by works*, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

"Seest thou how *faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?*

"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham *believed* God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

"Ye see then how *that by works a man is justified*, and not by faith only [Grk. "alone"]." Faith is shown through works which is keeping the law of God. People who say you should just "believe" without obedience are in great error, and Jesus said that those that do so are workers of "iniquity," and not righteousness.

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Paul wrote of this same event and he said Abraham was justified by *faith*, “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?”

“For if Abraham *were justified by works*, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

“For what saith the scripture? *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*”

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” (Romans 4:1-4). Is this a direct contradiction to what James was saying? No! Paul and James were saying the same thing. The “works” Paul was speaking of is MAN’S works, which is vanity, sin and unrighteousness NOT GOD’S works which is obedience to his law which Abraham did.

(For a full study on this subject Read our booklet the Saving works of God). Abraham was justified by Faith according to Paul which is keeping God’s law. Abraham was justified by works, according to James, meaning God’s works which is keeping God’s law. That is true and living faith- keeping God’s commandments!

Paul said, “Do we then make *void the law* through faith? *God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*” (Romans 3:31). Faith does not “void” the Law but the exact opposite is true, Faith is validated, “established” it becomes an active *living* faith.

Notice these other scriptures that describe who are just in God’s sight:

- “(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the *doers of the law shall be justified.*” (Romans 2:13). The “law” in this context is God’s law.
- “Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; *he is just*, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 18:9).
- Those that keep the law are justified in his sight, the “...just shall live by his faith.” (Habakkuk 2:4)- His “faith” meaning, keeping the law of God.
- “For as many as are of the works of the law [not God law but the “law of sin” (Rom 7:23)] are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that ***continueth not*** in all things which are written in the ***book of the law to do them.***
“But that no man is justified by the law [of sin] in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by faith.
“And the law [of sin] is not of faith: but, The *man that doeth them [God’s law] shall live in them*” (for a full study of this passage download our booklet the Savings works of God). The apostle Paul was quoting Lev 18:5 and Ezekiel 20: 11 that says, “And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, *which if a man do, he shall even live in them.*” The law of sin is not faith “but” in opposition to that, “The *man that doeth them [God’s law] shall live in them*” Keeping the law is faith and the person is just in God’s sight this is what Paul is telling the Galatians. The Man that keeps the commandments of God “shall live in [“by” (Strong’s #1722)] them” “The passage referred to, is in Lev 18:5, the word ‘them’, relates to the statutes and judgments...” (Gill Commentary, emphasis added). The just shall live by “them” meaning God’s law which is faith, the just shall live by Faith.

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Justified by the Blood of Jesus

What of the scripture, “Much more then, being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (Romans 5:9)?

Or, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
“Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;
“To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.
“Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.
“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” (Romans 3:23-28). Do these contradict the scriptures of the “doers of the law” are justified? Actually it does not?

Justification means to be “right” or “righteous” before God. “...the act of pronouncing righteous...the establishment of a person as just...” (Vine’s, p.338). A person is made righteous, or justified in the site of God, without sin to his charge.

What is righteousness according to the Bible? “all thy commandments are righteousness” (Psalm 119:172).

So what about what Paul said, “Therefore by *the deeds of the law* there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:”(Rom 3:20)? Actually, this chapter shows just what the “deeds of the law” are!

When examining the previous verses, one can understand what the “deeds” Paul is speaking of are, “As it is written, *There is none righteous, no, not one:*
“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
“They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
“Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:
“Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
“Their feet are swift to shed blood:
“Destruction and misery are in their ways:
“And the way of peace have they not known:
“There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (vv.10-18). Notice Paul said none is “righteous” and that none “doeth good.” These are the people, who are *sinning* in God sight. Man’s ways, not God’s. The ways of man is sin; these are the ones who are “guilty before God.” (v.19) this is whom Paul is referring to. Then he says about those who are “guilty before God,”

“Therefore by the *deeds of the law* there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:” (v.20). So what are the “deeds of the law?” The “deeds of the law,” is SIN, NOT GOD’S LAW. Man’s ways not God’s! Why did the Apostle call it the “deeds of the law”? What Law?

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The Apostle was speaking of two laws in the letter to the Romans. The “Law of God” and the “Law of SIN.” Notice Romans chapter 7, “For I *delight in the law of God* after the inward man: “But I see *another law* in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to *the law of sin* which is in my members.

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. *So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*” (22-25). Two laws and Paul wanted to serve the “law of God” not the “law of sin” which is breaking the Commandments of God, (1 John 3:4). This phrase, the “deeds” or “works” of the law when in its proper context means the law of sin, and not God’s law.

“Therefore by *the deeds of the law* [of sin] there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:”(Rom 3:20)

With this in mind, we can understand Paul when he writes, “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works [Sin]? Nay: but by the law of faith [God’s law].” (Romans 3:27).

Now Paul says, “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [Gk. hilast rion “Atonement victim” Strong’s #2435] through faith in his blood, *to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God;” (Romans 3:25).

John also agrees, “...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin... And he is the propitiation [Gk. Hilasmos “Atonement” Strong’s #2434] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 1:7; 2:1).

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, *and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*” (Rev 7:14). We are *made* righteous by the blood of Jesus. Where did this concept of the atonement come from? The Law of God! Or as Paul says “the law of faith.”

In the Old Testament when a person came before God for the forgiveness of sins, he confessed his sins and placed his hands on the sacrificial victim, and his sins were transferred to the animal, and the animal was sacrificed, and the blood was sprinkled on the altar, and “And the priest shall make an *atonement* for him before the LORD: and it shall be *forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.*” (Lev 6:7).

God said, “For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to *make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*” (Lev 17:11). The sacrificial system is still in place, but now it is the blood of Jesus Christ, and not the blood of bulls and lambs that make atonement for us and make us right and clean in the sight of God.

The Great prophecy in Isaiah 53 reveals the Messiah and that, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

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“But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; *and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*” (vv.4-6). The Messiah was the “Lamb of God” who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). God laid it on him and we are healed, cleansed of our sins, atoned for by His blood. It says God made, “...his soul an offering for sin,” (v.10). The next verse says, “...by his knowledge shall my righteous servant *justify many*; for he shall bear their iniquities.” (v.11). Jesus knew by his shed blood he would justify all who would come to him through cleansing of his blood.

The book of Hebrews describes a “reformation” (9:10). Not that the sacrificial system was abolished but “reformed” and instead of the blood of bulls and lambs, “For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” (Heb 10:4). The context means on a permanent basis, but were in remembrance again every year (v.3). This is why God, “had no pleasure” in them (v.8). Therefore, “He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.” (v.9). Meaning “set aside” (JFB Commentary) the “sacrifices” not the sacrificial law itself, but the victims, the animals, and established the second, “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all.*” (v.10). Only Jesus blood can permanently take away sin.

So like the Old Testament people, we are confess our sins, and Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins, and we are cleansed of our sins and are justified by his blood. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:9, 7). This is in the law of God. When we do this, we are “doers of the law” *we are following the instructions, the commandments of God for the atonement of our souls*, God’s way. Jesus is the way the truth and the life, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). “**Thy way**, O God, *is* in the **sanctuary**.” (Psalm 77:13). The sacrifice of Jesus is the only way to cleanse us of sin; the sanctuary where the sacrifices took place was a forerunner for the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus, and Jesus in the Heavenly sanctuary presents himself to the father as the atonement for our sin (Heb 9:23-26).

Then when we are cleansed we must *continue* in God’s righteousness-*his* law, and we are just and right in God’s sight. “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and *continueth therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:25).

“Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, *those that remember thee in thy ways*...in those [God’s ways] is *continuance*, and we shall be *saved.*” (Isaiah 64:5).

So “The just [cleansed by the blood of Jesus and made righteous in God’s sight] shall *live* by faith [“continue” in the righteousness of God which is his law]” (Gal 3:11). So when a person is “Justified,” “saved” and “cleansed” through Jesus, and this is all in *God’s law*, then what? Paul asked this very question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin [breaking God’s law 1 John 3:4], that grace may abound?”

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“*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*” (Rom 6:1-2). The Just shall *live* by faith which is keeping the law of God!

We must “continue” in the righteousness of God, his law, throughout our Christian life and we shall receive eternal life (Matthew 24:13).

This sacrifice of Jesus also ties in with the first commandment in the Law as we shall prove in the next section below.

John 6 and the First Commandment

Jesus gives us another example in the Gospel of John the 6th chapter. Who are these people? The chapter reveals, like chapter 8, were people who were his “disciples” (v.66), people who believed on him.

After the feeding of the 5000 many were looking for him, but not for salvation but for more food. Jesus told them, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, *but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*” (v.26). they travelled everywhere seeking for Christ for more food and did not grasp the lesson Jesus was trying to teach them, “They were more concerned with hungry stomachs than with hungry souls. It was a sharp and deserved rebuke.” (Robertson’s Word Pictures).

Notice what Jesus says to them, “***Labour*** not for the meat which perisheth, ***but*** for that meat which ***endureth unto everlasting life***, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.” (v.27). they labored all that time seeking physical food for temporary relief. But Jesus said to “Labour” for the spiritual food which endure unto everlasting life-so there are *works, labour is involved!* Those works are God’s works. Paul said, “For we are ***his*** workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*” (Ephesians 2:10).

Jesus and Paul believed what the scriptures have always said, notice:

- “The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin...He *is in* the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.” (Prov 10:16-17).
- “As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.” (Prov 11:19).
- “In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.” (Prov 12:28).
- “The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” (Prov 13:14).
- “He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.” (Prov 21:21).

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- “He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live...She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.” (Prov 4:4, 9).
- “Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye...Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.” (Prov 7:2, 3)

After this they asked Jesus, “Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?” (v.28).

Jesus told the believers the “work” that they ought to do, “Jesus answered and said unto them, *This is the work of God*, that ye **believe** on him whom he hath sent.” (v.29). There is only one work of God and that is his law. As noted above by James 1:25 and Isaiah 64:5-6, the works of God is his law, and Jesus is explaining to them that belief in him is the first commandment in the law of God!

Like John the 8th chapter Jesus was telling them the same thing that true belief was to keep the 1st commandment in the law of God. The Bible says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31; Acts 15:11). This is *God’s way of belief*, not our way; this is the first commandment in the Law of God!

Do we find this in the Law? Yes!

The First Commandment reads, “I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (Ex 20:2-3). Many people have probably read this passage many times, but do not understand its full meaning.

The Commandments of God are commandments of “faith” (Deuteronomy 32:20). In this chapter Moses gives a prophecy of Israel breaking the commandments of God (vv.16-17) and God says, “...for they *are* a very froward generation, children in whom *is no faith*.” (v.20). Jesus says “faith” is one of “the weightier *matters* of the law,” (Matthew 23::23).

In Hosea, God *repeats* this very commandment and adds this to it, “Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: *for there is no saviour beside me*.” (13:4). so what is God telling us here in the first Commandment of Faith? TO BELIEVE ON YOUR SAVIOUR! God is saying “no other gods can save you” only Yahweh, Jesus Christ does.

When Moses and Aaron went to Israel with the message of salvation (see Exodus 4:30), it says, “And the people *believed*: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.” (Ex 4:31). They believed God was going to save them from slavery. The first commandment basically says “I Am your Savior” All Israel had to do is believe, have faith in that commandment and God would save them. *Salvation is offered in that very commandment*, all one has to do is believe and *keep* it. Are we not to do the same in the New Testament? Yes! “Believe

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on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...” Have faith, have no other saviors but Jesus and God will save you from the bondage of sin.

The Commandment goes on to say, “I am the LORD thy God [the Savior], which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” Again, what did God do in Egypt? The Bible says that Israel was a “...*people saved by the LORD*,” (Deut 33:29). God always presented himself as Savior to Israel, “Look unto me, and be ye *saved*,” (Isaiah 45:22). God saved Israel from Egypt as Jesus saves us now from the bondage of Sin.

But not only did he save Israel, he redeemed Israel as well. “Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast *redeemed*: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.” (Ex 15:13).

“But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, *and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen*, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” (Deut 7:8).

“Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One,” (Isaiah 49:7). Did God not “redeemed us from the curse of the law” (Gal 3:13), by the blood of Christ? Do we not find? “redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;” (Ephesians 1:7)?

And God is our Justifier, “In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (Isa 45:25). we are “justified by faith” (Rom 5:1) as Paul says; *this is all in the first commandment in God’s law*.

Was Israel not justified by God through the *blood of the lamb* in the days of Moses? Are we not justified by the blood of Jesus who is the Lamb of God?

And who is the “LORD” or “YAHWEH” in the Old Testament? The one who became Jesus in the New, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8:58). Jesus is the Great “I AM” of the Bible, and only he can be the redeemer, Justifier, and Savior of Men. Yahweh said, “I, even I, am the LORD; and beside *me there is no saviour*.” (Isaiah 43:11). So, ***the First Commandment in the law*** says to BELIEVE ON YOUR SAVIOR, REDEEMER, AND WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY YAHWEH, WHO IS JESUS CHRIST!

Think of it, ***the law was given*** to a people who were “saved” “redeemed” “justified” and “baptized” (see 1 Corinth 10:2) to keep! There were to *continue in it*, live by “faith.”

Paul said of Israel when they received the law, “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*...and they to whom it was *first preached entered not in because of unbelief*.” (Hebrews 4:2, 6). When they received the law did they keep it? No, they built a golden calf and worshipped it, and Paul said, like the book of Deuteronomy, that they had “no faith,” and because of their “unbelief” did not enter the promised land which is a type of the kingdom of God, therefore those with no faith, people who do not obey God will not enter God’s kingdom, “Know ye not

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that the *unrighteous* [the opposite of God's righteousness which is his law Psalm 119:172] **shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived:** neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, "Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, *shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" (1Corinth 6:9-10). Paul said not to be "deceived." He said, "**Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of *unbelief.*" (Heb 4:11). Paul like Christ said we are to "labour" to enter the Kingdom of God.

So Jesus is the great "I AM" and if we believe in him, he shall make us free from bondage, bondage from sin. "I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Not only did God save Israel out of Egypt from slavery, but he saved them from that sin sick society. Jesus said in John 8th chapter that if you do not believe that he is the great "I AM" the Savior, then "ye shall die in your sins" (v.24). The breaking of the first commandment results in the loss of salvation. Believing on Jesus, which is the keeping of the first commandment of faith is how we are saved, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31). "Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: *for there is no saviour beside me.*" (Hosea 13:4). This is as Jesus says the WORK OF GOD to KEEP THE FIRST COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW AND YOU SHALL BE SAVED!

God's very character is in the first commandment. If we keep the first commandment of *believing* he will save, redeem and justify us, God will do it by what he has already established in his sacrificial law, which is accessible to all who receive it, the *atoning* sacrifice and shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Passover lamb that takes away the sins of the world. "For even Christ our Passover [lamb] is sacrificed for us:" (1 Corinth 5:7).

Faith IS...

The description of faith is given in Hebrews 11:1, 6 that says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen... 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.*"

First, how do we "please" God? "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs *that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;*" (Isaiah 56:4). Without Keeping the Law of God, which is faith, it is impossible to please him. God wants obedience which is true faith.

How do we "seek" him? "*My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;*

"So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding;

"*If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, *and find the knowledge of God.*

"For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:1-6).

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“The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God.*” (Psalm 14:2).

“Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read:” (Isaiah 34:16).

“Now therefore in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, *keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God:* that ye may possess this good land, and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.” (1 Chronicles 28:8). Those that seek the Lord are those who search for wisdom and understanding that is found in his law on how to live, and please God in this life, and how to receive eternal life as well.

What of the first verse? It says that “Faith is the substance of things hoped for...” What does this mean? The word “substance” is “hupostasis” (Strong’s #5287). Archaeology reveals that a “hupostasis” is a legal document a “title-deed” that claims a person’s property (Blessed Assurance, by William G. Johnsson, pp.126-127).

Robertson’s Word Pictures also claims, “Hupostasis is a very common word from Aristotle on and comes from huphistēmi (hupo, under, histēmi, intransitive), *what stands under anything (a building, a contract, a promise)*. See the philosophical use of it in Heb 1:3, the sense of assurance (une assurance certaine, Menegoz) in Heb 3:14, that steadiness of mind which holds one firm (2Cointh 9:4). *It is common in the papyri in business documents as the basis or guarantee of transactions.* ‘And as this is the essential meaning in Heb 11:1 we venture to suggest the translation ‘*Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for*’” (Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, etc.)”

What is that contract we have with God? Faith, says the apostle, is the title deed to the things for which we hope. We must remember that God is a “Covenant” God. He made a covenant with Abraham that he and his seed will live forever in the land God gave him. **This covenant is the title deed.** We Christians “are ye Abraham’s seed, and *heirs according to the promise.*” (Gal 3:29). What promise? The promise God made with Abraham, the promise that Abraham did not receive (Heb 11:13). But will receive in the Kingdom (Luke 13:28) eternal life!

The Covenant God presented to Israel was the same covenant God made with Abraham, and if they obeyed him he would give them the land of Israel forever. “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he *is* God, the faithful God, which *keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments* to a thousand generations... Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD *thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers:*” (Deuteronomy 7:9, 12). (Read our booklet the Saving works of God for a full study of the Covenants). God promises to keep his covenant with us, and we in turn must keep his commandments. We, by keeping the commandments are showing our faith for the “things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” We stay in the faith because we want eternal life, and to be with God and receive the promise of eternal life, “And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even eternal life.*” (1 John 2:25). This is the promise to Abraham and to his seed.

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Johnsson says of this verse, “Hebrews 11:1 is not, strictly speaking, a definition of faith. Rather, it is a description, setting forth two elements that comprise faith.

“*Faith, in fact, is a relational term.* It can never be reduced to a definition. To define it is to lose it. In essence *faith is a relationship of trust*, the giving of one’s self completely to the Lord. This is why Paul in Romans 14 contrasts faith with doubting and concludes that whatever is outside the circle of faith is sin.

“In the descriptive analysis of faith in Hebrews 11:1 elements of time and space intersect. *Faith is the title deed to things hoped for.* That is, it is future directed. It looks beyond this present world to eternal realities. Faith longs and hopes for the day when God’s promises will be realized fully for the believer. Faith also is the evidence of things not seen. It knows that already the unseen world exists, that the heavenly realities for which we long and toward which we strive have been provided by God and will come into our view in His good time.

“Hebrews 11, surely one of the most famous chapters of the Bible, sets forth a series of examples of men and women from ancient times. As we analyze this long list, we realize that every example illustrates the opening verse of the chapter. Some of the examples illustrate the first part of the verse—the element of hope. Other examples illustrate the second part of the verse—the element the unseen. In some examples the two elements blend as in Hebrews 11:6.

“*...faith is an ongoing relationship with the Lord.* It is a life of continuing trust, ***of continuing obedience***, of continuing hoping, of continuing confidence in the presence of the Lord, of continuing looking to the unseen world, of continuing holding in our hand the title- deed to the eternal realities.” (Blessed Assurance, by William G. Johnsson, pp.128, 129, 130, emphasis his and mine).

Promises of God

God makes many promises to those who are faithful to him. God promises to heal, to save, and to answer your prayers. Again however, there is always one condition that many tend to forget, “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.”

“*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*” (John 14:13).

In the Old Testament God promises to heal Israel, notice the condition, “And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt *give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes*, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: *for I am the LORD that healeth thee.*” (Ex 15:26). Not only will God protect us from diseases but he will heal us from disease as well if we stay obedient to him.

When Jesus healed the blind men, notice what transpired, “And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.*”

“And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, ***Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.***

“Then touched he their eyes, saying, ***According to your faith be it unto you.***

“And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know *it.*” (Matthew 9:27-30). Jesus asked them if they “believed” if they had faith in him to heal them.

They knew he was “the son of David.” They knew the Messiah had come. They knew the prophecies of “God with us.” These blind men did not believe as the other people did in John 6

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and 8. They believed in the *first* commandment of God, God's way to believe. Gills says, "for though their bodily eyes were at present dark, the eyes of their understandings were enlightened, to see and know *Jesus to be the true Messiah, David's Son, and Lord.*" (emphasis added). They called him "Lord." The word is "Kurios" (Strong's #2962). This is a divine title for God.

Thayers says, "this title is given to: God, the Messiah"

Strong's says, "From κῦρος kuros (*supremacy*); *supreme* in authority, that is, (as noun) *controller*; by implication *Mr.* (as a respectful title): - God, Lord, master, Sir."

Its Hebrew equivalent is "adonai yehovih" (Strong's #136). "Used as a proper name *for God only*" (Strong's). Jesus asked them if they believed he was able to do this, and they said yes and acknowledged him as "Lord." They believed that he was "the LORD that healeth thee." (Ex 15:26). They believed in the first commandment in the Law of God. And Jesus said, "**According to YOUR faith be it unto you.**" Because they believe Jesus was the "Lord" and believed in the first commandment to believe on your Savior, they were healed—"according to their faith." Yes God can heal, but do you believe that Jesus is God, the God of the Old Testament, the God that demands we keep the first commandment in the Law of having faith in your savior? They did and received healing, today if people would just obey this one commandment they would as well. I believe this is why we do not see many healings today, because people do not keep the first commandment in the Law of God.

Why is it that in certain cases, Jesus, "*And he did not* many mighty works there because of their **unbelief.**" (Matthew 13:58)? They did not accept Christ as Lord and Messiah. Jesus said, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." (v.57). Luke 4:16-29 describes the same episode that took place. Jesus read out of the book of Isaiah the prophecy about the Messiah and they did not believe that Jesus was "Lord" and to be worshipped as Lord by the first Commandment in the Law. So Jesus did not do many works there because they did not believe in the first commandment in God's law.

Search the Scriptures

Remember, whatever your need, the first thing to do, to be sure of receiving an answer to your prayer, is to search the Scriptures, to learn whether it is GOD'S WILL (Eph. 5:17; 2 Tim. 3:14-17). "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing *according to his will, he heareth us:*

"And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14-15).

The Bible reveals God's will. We need never say, "Well, I know GOD could heal me IF IT IS HIS WILL." You can know His will. And so far as healing is concerned, I can tell you definitely that His Word says plainly and emphatically that it is His will. The Bible is full of promises — literally FULL of them. If you need anything, study to see whether God promised it, and if He has, *he cannot break a promise!* God is our father and we can go to him and say "Father you promised." You can tell God HE has promised and then CLAIM that promise as applied to your case and TRUST God to keep it and let God take over from there — leave it with Him — let

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Him do it — He'll do it, every time *just stay obedient to him!* God promises to supply every need- if we'll seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His RIGHTEOUSNESS — which is God's law, true faith staying loyal to him-He will provide every material need (Matt. 6:33).

Why People Lack Faith

Why don't we have FAITH, and how may we get it? So many say, "Well, I have no impression-I have no feeling, no conviction-that I shall get the answer."

They want to wait until they get a certain CONVICTION, a certain FEELING, a sort of assurance they can FEEL-before they really believe they shall have the answer.

But THAT is not faith!

That is FEELING!

Your feeling, your convictions, your impressions, have absolutely not one thing or the other to do with FAITH. FAITH HAS ONLY TO DO WITH GOD'S WORD! The one question is, has God promised it in the Bible? If He has, then probabilities, possibilities, feelings, convictions, impressions, have nothing whatsoever to do with it. God has a thousand ways we know nothing of, of answering and providing whatever He has promised. We don't need to see HOW He is going to do it. What He has promised, He will perform; but He will do it HIS way, and in HIS TIME. Leave all that to HIM and just TRUST HIM stay faithful and rely upon His word.

A great example is the centurion who came to Jesus asking for healing of his servant. He did not need to see Jesus heal him, he just knew Jesus could, a perfect example of believing in the commandment of faith for he was a believer (Luke 7:5). This same centurion was the one who became baptized by Peter, "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*,
"A devout *man*, and one that *feared God with all his house*, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:1-2).

Notice what takes place, "Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: *but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.*

"For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it.*

"When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, *I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.*

"And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick" (Luke 7:7-10). He did not have to see, he knew Jesus was the healer of Israel and sent by God, all one has to do is believe without seeing, just believe in the first commandment in the law of God. Matthew added to this, "And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; *and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.* And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." (Matthew 8:13). As he said to the two blind men.

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God Tries your Faith

James 1:3 says that the trying of your faith works PATIENCE into your character. God has revealed, in this and other Scriptures that He will sometimes TRY your faith and to teach you to be patient! “Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

“But let patience have *her* perfect work, *that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

“But let him ask *in faith*, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

“For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” (James 1:3-7). If you doubt your faith, your whole belief in keeping the commandments of God, and you just believe as people in this world do, *but your obedience lacks* then James says, “...let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” We must “continue” in his word, “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with *all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*” (Deuteronomy 6:5). This man will receive an answer to prayer.

Faith is staying obedient to God knowing that he will do that which HE *has not yet done*. Faith is what you must exercise until God answers-until you can see that God has answered-your faith must remain firm and steadfast, and patient, regardless of what you see or feel, until God actually answers you, as He has promised to do.

Many a time your human nature wants you to believe that faith is something you exercise for about 30 seconds, while you are still praying, and then if God has not done what He promised as soon as you expect, you are to find God guilty of lying. The instant you yield to the devil’s influence over your human nature and you believe that God will not do what He promised just because He has not done it yet- that moment you make God out a liar -you lose all FAITH in God; and you thereupon break your part of the Covenant, which is to have faith and keep on having faith, and trusting God, and relying upon Him, UNTIL He performs what He promised.

A thrilling example of this eternal truth is recorded in the Book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, erected a great golden image.

“Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations and languages that at what time ye hear the sound of the [band] ... ye fall down and worship the golden image” (Dan. 3:4-5).

“And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (verse 6).

Set over the affairs of the province of Babylon were Daniel’s three young Jewish friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The first and second of the Commandments of God’s eternal spiritual Law forbids such worship of images.

Had you been in their place, what would YOU have done? Would you not have said, “Well, I have to bow down to this image-I have to do it or be killed!” And perhaps you would have

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excused yourself by reasoning thus: “I don’t think God would be fair if He punished me for this, when He knows I am FORCED to do it. Anyway, He tells us to be subject to the power of the state!” Yes, it is easy to use reason to excuse disobedience to God. But God is not looking for chances to punish us- but rather for opportunities to SAVE us through faith to save us from the folly of SIN and the sad consequence our own acts impose!

God’s Law is intended to protect us from suffering. Whatever we sow we shall reap. It is not God who punishes us when we do wrong; it is merely our own acts rebounding like a boomerang!

But these three young Jews *knew the truth*-that we should OBEY GOD rather than men that through FAITH God makes it possible. When they firmly REFUSED to bow down to worship the king’s image, Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded they be brought before him (verse 13).

Listen to the quiet, trusting, unafraid answer of these lads. “O Nebuchadnezzar ... our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace”! (Verses 16-18).

Sometimes God tries our faith. He tried theirs. You might think He failed them, but He only *permitted their faith to be tested*.

“Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury and the form of his visage was changed ... therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated ... Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments,”- surely the (God whom they trusted would have them released now? But no- there was no physical evidence whatever that God so much as heard!-“and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace”! (Verses 19-21).

The furnace was so hot the flames leaped out and “slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.” And they fell down “bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace!”

God permitted them actually to be thrown in! Was He unmindful of those who trusted in Him to make possible the keeping of His Commandments? Not God!

The king looked into the furnace, and said, “Lo, I, see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of GOD”! (Verse 25). So Nebuchadnezzar came near the mouth of the furnace and called to them.

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither! Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came forth of the midst of the fire... these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and DELIVERED his servants that TRUSTED IN HIM”! (Verses 26-28).

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THERE was an example of living FAITH-of staying *obedient* to God, and God fulfilling his promises!

It's a Gift, *not* earned

This faith is a gift from God. The natural man does not seek to know God. Paul says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:10-12). No it's a gift *from* God. God has to put this faith in us.

Romans 5:17 speaks of the "gift of righteousness" which is God's law, "for all thy commandments *are* righteousness." (Psalm 119:172).

"...*grace reign through righteousness* unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom 5:21).

Notice, "For by grace are ye saved *through* faith; and that not of *yourselves: it is the gift of God:*" (Ephesians 2:8). Faith as noted above is keeping the law of God, and it is the "gift of God." It cannot be achieved by man apart from God, "not of *yourselves*" Paul said it comes from God!

This gift of God's law (grace) given to us, shows us the way of Salvation, as Psalms says, "...be GRACIOUS to me THROUGH YOUR LAW" (Psalm 119:29 NIV).

"The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

"*For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

(Prov 1:7-9). God's grace, his favor is revealed by his law, this is why Jesus told the rich young ruler, "but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Matthew 19:17); *Grace through faith* (For a full study on grace read our booklet the Saving Works of God).

Even at Mount Sinai God gave them his law it wasn't earned but a gift, "And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and *he gave them* in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in Mount Sinai." (Ex 34:32; see also Ezekiel 20:11, 12, 25).

How is this gift given? By the Holy Spirit! "...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom 5:5).

"For this *is the love of God, that we keep his commandments:* and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3). When one receives the Holy Spirit after one has made the decision to repent and is baptized (Acts 2:38) God then at the receiving of the Holy Spirit carves the title deed, the Covenant, his law, the faith of God on the fleshly tables of the converted persons heart, and enters the covenant with God, "But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;* and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer 31:33).

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“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit *will I put within you*: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

“*And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

“And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” (Ezekiel 36:25-28).

“*it having been made plain that you are Christ’s letter*, served by us, not having been inscribed by ink, but by *the Spirit of the living God*, not in tablets of stone, but in fleshly tablets of *the heart*.” (2 Corinth 3:3). Christians are the letter of Christ, those letters, “...the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;” (Deut 28:58). What is written is his law is on our hearts.

When we receive this “gift” of faith from God, his law, we must “continue” in it and we shall be saved. Notice the scriptures, ““...*continue in them*: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Timothy 4:16).

“*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

“And that from a child thou hast known the *holy scriptures*, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation *through faith* which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim 3:14-15).

“If ye *continue in the faith* grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven;” (Colossians 1:23).

Isaiah 64:5 says, “Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee *in thy ways... in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.*” Over and over again the Bible says we must “continue” in the ways of God, continue in his way of salvation and we shall receive eternal life.

Jesus said, “But he that shall endure *unto the end*, the same shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:13).

“But whoso looketh into the *perfect law of liberty*, and *continueth therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer of the work*, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:25).

“And he that overcometh, and *keepeth my works unto the end*, to him will I give power over the nations:” (Rev 2:26).

Notice the description of the church in the end time, “Here *is endurance of the saints*: here are those *keeping the commands of God*, and the faith of Jesus.” (Young’s Literal Translation). They endure by keeping the Commandments of God. It also says “and the faith of Jesus.” Robertson’s Word Pictures says “The faith in Jesus.”

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The Next verse reveals the context of what this means, “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead *which die in the Lord from henceforth*: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from *their labours; and their works do follow them.*” (v.13). since these people that endure by keeping the law of God in this life, and had “faith in Jesus” to *save* them from the trials in this life, and God gave them “rest from their labours” when they died with full assurance that God would raised them from the dead.

Jesus said, “If ye *continue in my word*, then are ye my disciples indeed; “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free....As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: *continue ye in my love....If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love*; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 8:31-32; 15:9-10). A Covenant Relationship between us and God! God calls us, we receive his *law (which includes the atonement and sacrifice of Christ for our sins as Paul proves in the book of Hebrews)*, and we continue in God's way-*his law* unto the end and endure, we shall receive eternal life.

By the Spirit of God

It is by the spirit of God dwelling in us that we are able to keep the law of God.

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus about salvation and he said, “If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS” (Matt. 19:17). It says that “When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; *but with God, all things are possible*” (verses 25-26).

There is Christ’s own answer! With men it IS impossible- utterly impossible to really KEEP His Commandments. But-here’s the blessed truth-WITH GOD, it is possible, even to keep His Commandments. Do you begin to see? It takes the power of GOD!

A LIVING FAITH-the only kind that will SAVE-is an active faith-one that TRUSTS GOD to make it possible to OBEY HIM-to live the true Christian life-to KEEP His blessed Commandments!

What are the steps? Do we just say a prayer of “Lord Jesus come into my heart and save me” as the televangelists want us to believe? No! The Bible says, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? “Then Peter said unto them, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” (Acts 2:37, 38). It is when the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in our hearts that the Law is written, it is only then can we keep the commandments of God. “and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that *obey him*” (Acts 5:32). With the Law in our hearts we can “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts 16:31). To continue in his love, his law unto the end.

Think! Could a just God command men to do what is IMPOSSIBLE to do? Or can we conceive of Jesus as a smart-aleck young man who knew more than His FATHER, and who did away with His Father’s Commandments? How absurd! Yet this is the popular conception today! God has,

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and will give you, the love that will fulfill His LAW. And so it is possible through FAITH, given by *the gift of the Holy Spirit*, for man to keep His Commandments! And whoever claims differently, God calls a plain LIAR (1 John 2:4).

Can a Believer worship Jesus in Vain?

When God's Word says, "BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," it does not mean the DEAD faith now *popularly taught!* The common teachings of this day distort this to mean a mere belief in the FACTS of Christ's existence, His sacrifice, and His saving work. Just accept these FACTS, and accept HIM *-without any obedience to God's Laws!* But the demons believe these things- and they TREMBLE -but they are not thereby saved! (James 2:19). As James says a person who does this is a "vain man." (James 2:20).

Many people in this world "believe" on Jesus, and believe he can heal and answer prayers, but their prayers seem to go unanswered. They believe but how do they live their lives? Are they obedient to God? It's a covenant relationship! God *will*, if *we* will obey. This sort of belief of just believing is man's way not God's way!

Christ came to save us FROM, not in, our sins! To FREE us from the enslavement of sin and the unhappiness and wretchedness it brings -not to make us free to commit sin!

Is it possible to BELIEVE in Christ -to worship Him- in the customary manner of the day, and yet be lost? Christ Himself says, "YES!"

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the will of my Father which is in heaven," He said (Matt. 7:21).

"Howbeit IN VAIN do they worship me, teaching for *doctrines the commandments* of men. For *laying aside the commandment of God*. ye hold the tradition of men"! (Mark 7:7-8). People can pray all they want, if they are not willing to subject themselves to the laws of God, the answer will not come.

God says, "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1-2).

And, "They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, *which refused to hear my words*; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

"Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; *and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.*" (Jer 11:10-11). If we refuse to repent and obey God, he will not hear people prayers, they can believe in God all they want, if they don't obey *he will not hear!*

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Notice what Jesus says again to people who believe in him, meaning *their* way, “Not every one that saith unto me, *Lord, Lord*, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*.”

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, *have we not prophesied in thy name?* and in thy *name* have cast out devils? *and in thy name* done many wonderful works?

“And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*” (Matthew 7:21-23). These are people who believe. Who calls him “lord”? Christians! They do all these works in Jesus name, but they work “iniquity” which is sin, “for sin is the transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4).

How do we “know” God? “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (1 John 2:3-4). Many people say they “know” Jesus but say that the law is “done away.” These, John says don’t know God, they are “liars.”

God commands obedience. This is true love, for God and neighbor, “For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: *therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*” (Rom 13:9-10).

“Faith which worketh *by love*” (Gal 5:6). This is how faith is active and living by the Love of God which is his commandments.

Paul also said, “...though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, *and have not charity, I am nothing.*” (1 Corinth 13:2). The word “charity” is “agape” (Strong’s #26) and it means “Love.” The same word in 1 John 5:3 defining the “Love of God.” Paul says without the Love of God your faith is “nothing.”

Jesus told the Ephesian Church in the book of Revelation that they “left thy first love [“agape”]” (Rev 2:4). That first “Love” is the love and worship of Jesus, the first commandment in the Law of God. He told them to repent, he said, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the *first works*; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except *thou repent.*” (v.5). the “first works” is the “work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” (John 6:29). These are the works of faith, God’s works.

Jesus said a dead faith; belief *without* obedience is *vain worship*! Those who trust in it, and in the men and denominations which teach it, ARE LOST! And the quicker we come to realize it, the better! We must realize that worshipping God in vain is breaking the 3rd commandment in the law of God. “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” (Ex 20:7). The name of God also means the “authority” of God. The commandments of men Jesus spoke of, if that supersedes the authority of God, *his law*, then this is *vain worship*. “We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29).

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God's PURPOSE in salvation is to rescue men *from* sin, and its resulting unhappiness, misery, and death! To REPENT of sin is the first step!

Then the BLOOD OF CHRIST, upon acceptance of his sacrifice he made for us, and by baptism, which is a symbol of accepting his sacrifice for us (see Romans 6:2-5) cleanses of all past sins.

Then FAITH is given to us when hands are laid on us and we receive that gift of the Holy Spirit, which writes God's law (faith) on our hearts (Rom 5:5) we are kept from sin in the future by keeping his law, because breaking it is sin (see 1 John 3:4). Thus the *resulting* righteousness which is by *faith* (Heb 11:7)-the righteousness imparted from God. As a result, "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev 22:14).