

What Saith the Scripture?

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According to Your Faith  
Or, The Fundamental Rule of Conduct for the Kingdom of God

"According to your faith be it unto you"

(Matthew 9:29).

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**Preface**

The Exceeding Grace of God (2Corinthians 9:14) flowing from the fountainhead of the Infinite Love of God, elicits the response of a "faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6) in the Saints. Manwardly, *all that is done acceptably in the Kingdom of God must be brought to pass by faith.* "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). The Sovereign Grace of God demands the response of an Uncomplicated Faith from man. "For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Too long, an artificial distinction has been entertained in Christendom between Living By Faith and Being Simply Christian, when, in fact, all who call themselves by the Name of Christ are mandated to Live By Faith, or suffer the displeasure of God. "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (10:38).

Because of the lukewarm "love" of the Laodicean Church today, walking "by faith" (2Corinthians 5:7) has been replaced with a materialistic accumulation of goods-- "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" (Revelation 3:17)-- which has been equated to a Sure Foundation. "11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this Foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 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" (1Corinthians 3:11-13).

This Laodicean conduct of striving for greater income, greater ease, more education, more health care benefits, more retirement benefits, etc.-- at the expense of living "by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4)-- is the very reason for the "Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the Creation of God" (Revelation 3:14) giving His scathing rebuke and warning. "15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. 18 I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (3:15-16,18).

**Why Faith?**

Why did the Almighty choose to use the medium of faith to justify the ungodly? Because "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24), faith must apprehend God "as seeing Him Who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). Since True Faith is simply our **confidence** in God that leads us to love and obey Him, then our reliance upon Him and His record justifies us. "10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the Record that God gave of His Son. 11 And this is the Record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in His Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life" (1 John 5:10-12). Specifically, Saving Faith trusts not upon itself for salvation, but it trusts **solely** upon the LORD Jesus Christ to accomplish "So Great Salvation" (Hebrews 2:3) in the Believer. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15).

Only through the instrumentality of faith are we able to perceive God and realize the love that He has manifested to us through the atonement of the LORD Jesus Christ on the Cross. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His Only Begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9). Once we have perceived by faith the "love of God, because He laid down His life for us" (3:16), then we respond with **the love that drives our obedience**. "For this is the Love of God, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are not grievous" (5:3). Whether it was the Philippian jailer or the Church of Galatia, the Apostle Paul made it clear that to "believe on the LORD Jesus Christ" (Acts 16:31) would justify and save the Believer. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16).

The Word of God is the foundation to all that we believe about God. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). If we take away the certainty of the Scriptures, we do not really know what to believe. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). But, if we lean in faith upon what His Word has revealed to us, then we can be confident that He "is able to keep [us] from falling, and to present [us] faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have **committed unto Him** against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12).

Whatever we lack in understanding and experience, our faith will yet overcome through the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:19). God has ordained our faith to be the vehicle through which we overcome the world, instead of being consumed ourselves. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). Through faith in the Promises of God, we partake of Christ. "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" (2 Peter 1:4). The very indwelling and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is accomplished through faith. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the Promise of

the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:14).

### **The Vitality of Faith**

Faith appeals to the very nature of man, "for in the image of God made He man" (Genesis 9:6). When we speak of the "grace of God that bringeth Salvation" (Titus 2:11), we emphasize the Godward side of our Salvation. But, when we accentuate faith and believing, we are stressing the manward aspect of the "common Salvation" (Jude 3). Grace highlights the Scriptural picture of a God Who is "worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power" (Revelation 4:11), i.e., a God Who is worthy of our trust. The greater a revelation that the Spirit graciously gives us of the LORD from His Word, the greater we are able to trust Him. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth Them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21). **Faith** only operates where the **Grace** of God can be found. But, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). Also, "it is of **faith**, that it might be by **grace**" (4:16). "By Whom also we have access by **faith** into this **grace** wherein we stand" (5:2). "For by **grace** are ye saved through **faith**" (Ephesians 2:8).

Faith is the amazing medium by which God accomplishes His work in the Saints, because:

(1) Forgiveness of Sins is received only through faith.

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

(2) Gospel Justification is accomplished only through faith.

"And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses" (Acts 13:39).

(3) Salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ.

"Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

(4) True Light only comes through faith in Christ Jesus.

"I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).

(5) True Life is imparted only through faith in the Son of God.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

(6) Everlasting Life is only accessible through faith in the LORD Jesus.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath Everlasting Life" (John 6:47).

(7) Gospel Rest is enjoyed by the Saints now, but only through faith in God.

"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Hebrews 4:3).

(8) Spiritually Edifying or Building Up ourselves, comes only through faith in the Word of God and the operation of the Spirit.

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

(9) Spiritual Preservation comes only through faith in God.

"Who are kept by the Power of God through faith unto Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1Peter 1:5).

(10) Our Adoption and Sonship only comes by faith in the LORD Jesus.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

(11) Access to God is only made available through faith in Jesus.

"In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him" (Ephesians 3:12).

(12) The Promises of God are only given to them that believe Jesus.

"But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the Promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Galatians 3:22).

(13) Sanctification or Godly Living is accomplished only by faith in God.

"And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). And,

(14) The Blessed Holy Spirit's Presence to ensure obedience and victory comes only through faith in the LORD Jesus Christ.

"In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation: in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise" (Ephesians 1:13).

## **A Saving Faith**

The same advice that the LORD Jesus gave to Jairus, a ruler of the Capernaum synagogue, when someone informed him that his little daughter had just died, is appropriate for all who would be saved. "Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark 5:36). Jairus and his wife cooperated with Jesus, when Jesus ushered all but a few out of the room, and then commanded, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise" (5:41), with the result that the "damsel arose, and walked" (5:42). In particular, we are called upon to believe that our pardon for the sins that we have committed is tied to the LORD Jesus Christ's sacrificial Atonement on the Cross, i.e., "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Eternal Life" (John 3:15). *Saving Faith rests only in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). Christ's death on the Cross rendered it honorable for God to pardon rebels for their crimes-- without setting aside the Moral Law-- on the condition of their repentance and faith. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2Corinthians 5:19).

If God's forgiveness of our sins was not tied to our repentance and faith, then future obedience to the still intact Moral Law of Supreme Love of God and an Equal Love of Our Neighbour would become

meaningless, because the Moral Law would become only a Moral Suggestion without a penalty for disobedience. "37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great Commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39). Saving Faith is directly linked to trusting in Christ's Atonement, which enables God's remission or pardoning of our sins, when we repent and believe the Gospel. "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). The Atonement of the LORD Jesus Christ is the reconciliation that is made possible because Jesus died on the Cross, the "Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1Peter 3:18).

Saving Faith believes that:

(1) Our disobedience to God's Moral Law is sin.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law" (1John 3:4).

(2) Our punishment for our sinning is death.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4).

"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

(3) Jesus Christ is the

"Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

(4) Christ's Once-for-All Sacrifice makes possible our Salvation.

"But this man [Christ Jesus], after He had offered One Sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). And,

(5) A Faith Which Worketh By Love (Galatians 5:6) relies upon the Finished Work of Christ on the Cross for Eternal Salvation.

"9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the LORD shall be saved" (Romans 10:9,13). In short, Saving Faith believes to the obtaining of "Salvation which is in Christ Jesus" (2Timothy 2:10).

## A Sanctifying Faith

In a sermon, "Sanctification By Faith", Charles G. Finney maintained that, "The doctrine of justification by faith produces sanctification, by producing the only true obedience to the Law." "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). Further, Finney explained, "By this I mean, that when the mind understands this plan [justifying men by offering them the Free Gift of Salvation], and exercises faith in it, it naturally produces sanctification. Sanctification is holiness ["But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end Everlasting Life" (Romans 6:22)], and holiness is nothing but obedience to the law ["Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through **sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience** and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1Peter 1:2)], consisting in love to God and love to man." Not only has God appointed faith to be the medium of our salvation, but *faith in*

*Christ is the instrument of our sanctification as well.* "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Acts 26:18).

A Sanctifying Faith is a presently **alive** faith. "Being justified freely by His Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). Even the least of all Saints saved by Free Grace, must have exercised the requisite Common Faith (Titus 1:4) to "sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke 7:50; 18:42), identifies the personal exercise of faith as the essential response of all those who are redeemed by the "manifold grace of God" (1Peter 4:10). We do not begin to live by faith at a future time in our Christian walk, but we are already walking by faith and "not by sight" (2Corinthians 5:7), if we are truly "in Christ" (5:17). We are not potentially going to live in the future by faith, but we are presently living by faith, if God has "translated us into the Kingdom of His Dear Son" (Colossians 1:13). "For therein [the Gospel of Christ] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17).

### **As Thou Hast Believed**

True Faith in Jesus, Who is the Word of God (John 1:1,14), is the essential rule of conduct for the Kingdom of God. "Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). On three occasions in the Gospel of Matthew, the LORD Jesus healed in response to the faith of the supplicants. A Roman centurion beseeched Jesus for his sick servant, "LORD, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented" (Matthew 8:6). When Jesus demonstrated His willingness to come and heal the centurion's servant, the centurion said, "LORD, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (8:8). The LORD Jesus marvelled at this Gentile's faith, and said, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (8:10). Then, Jesus enunciated clearly the Fundamental Rule of Conduct for the Kingdom of God. Jesus said to the centurion, "Go thy way; and **as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee**" (8:13), with the result that the centurion's "servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (8:13). The impression is that for the centurion to be truly motivated to believe, must mean that the Grace of God must have drawn him to believe, i.e., "by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). God's Grace draws us to believe Him, to take Him at His Word, and to receive the benefits of His Gifts. "For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). It is only left for man to receive by faith the Grace of God. "They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

If True Faith was only what man originated in his own heart, then "he hath whereof to glory; but not before God" (Romans 4:2). Man can and must exercise Acceptable Faith, because the Everlasting God has already made all gracious provision for that faith. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the Earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22). A second instance, in the Gospel of Matthew, of the LORD healing in response to the faith of the beseechers, occurred when two blind men followed Jesus with a heartfelt desire for healing. Expressing their confidence in Jesus' messiahship, they cried, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us" (Matthew 9:27). After they followed Jesus into a house, Jesus finally turned and said unto them, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?"

(9:28), understanding implicitly their desire for the restoration of their sight. They fervently replied, "Yea, LORD" (9:28)! Then Jesus touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you" (9:29). **True Faith is simply trusting Jesus-- believing what He said He would do.** Or, as the Apostle Paul succinctly expressed, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25). The two blind men's desire for healing had never yielded them their sight before. "Vain is the help of man" (Psalm 108:12). *But, this time their faith was expressly in the LORD Jesus to open their eyes.* "And their eyes were opened" (9:30)!

Though True Faith is often dramatic, as in the healing of the Roman centurion's servant or restoring the sight of the two blind men, it must also be simple, or we would never be able to muster up the required faith to accomplish anything. "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17). A third instance of the LORD healing in response to faith, was the case of the Syrophenician woman. She cried to the LORD Jesus, "Have mercy on me, O LORD, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil" (Matthew 15:22). Not for meanness, but to test her resolve and strengthen her faith, Jesus "answered her not a word" (15:23). Silence from the LORD does not necessarily mean "No"; instead, it ought to prompt us to be importunate. "Because of [our] importunity [shameless and repeated asking] He will rise and give [us] as many as [we need]" (Luke 11:8). Even Jesus' disciples said, "Send her away; for she crieth after us" (Matthew 15:23), giving even more cause to discourage the Syrophenician woman. In addition, Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (15:24). Undaunted, she came and worshipped Jesus, saying, "LORD, help me" (15:25). Completing His testing of the desperate woman, Jesus answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs" (15:26). Our LORD desires our faith in prayer to be bold and unwavering. "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" (James 1:6). Just as Jesus knew she would, she said, "Truth, LORD: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table" (Matthew 15:27). With great satisfaction and love, Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (15:28). "And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (15:28). May our faith aspire to be as simple, humble, and importunate as this Syrophenician woman!

### **Trusting Jesus Is the Essence of Christianity**

Since man's Original Sin in the Garden of Eden was based upon questioning the love and integrity of the Creator, i.e., "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1), the LORD has gone to great extremes to bring mankind back to their Original Confidence in the Creator. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Malachi 3:7). Our Rock can be trusted, unlike the rock of the heathen. "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (Deuteronomy 32:31). Trusting the LORD for "all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness" (2Peter 1:3) is the practical application of faith to Christian Sanctification. More than a dusty theological doctrine or a quaint lyric to a Gospel song, "trusting Jesus" is the heart of True Christianity. "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham **believed** God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness" (Romans 4:3).

The Professed Church has forgotten that True Faith "worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6), and has fallen into the trap of Antinomianism. While asserting their faith in Jesus has saved them, they deny any

necessity to continue in the Covenant of Faith to receive the Promised Rest. "11 So I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My Rest. 18 And to whom swear He that they should not enter into His Rest, but to them that believed not?" (Hebrews 3:11,18). The Antinomian tendency of the Professed Church, cries loudly against works, and especially against the legalism that they confuse with the "obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26). "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14). When James wrote against this same tendency in the Early Church, he, of course, meant that the Faith that could not save was an Intellectual Only Faith, and not the Genuine Faith that "worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). The only acceptable works in the eyes of God, are the works that are consistent with Faith. "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" (James 2:18).

Unquestionably, faith in the LORD Jesus Christ to save us from our sins-- past, present, and future-- is central to the Gospel message of Christianity. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12). The Apostle Paul testified to the unconverted Jews that they could not be justified by their attempts to keep the Law, but only through faith in Jesus. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38). At the historic Jerusalem council, Peter agreed with Paul and Barnabas that Salvation for the Gentiles-- as well as the Jews-- was not accomplished by the keeping of the Law of Moses, but by faith. "But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (15:11). During our LORD's earthly ministry, He continually attested to the necessity and efficacy of faith in Himself for the forgiveness of sins, the gift of Eternal Life, and the assurance of being resurrected with the Just. "He that believeth on the Son hath Everlasting Life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). Also, "this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have Everlasting Life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (6:40).

### **The Promised Holy Spirit is the New Covenant's Means of Assuring Our Obedience**

Faith in Christ not only saves us from our sins, but grants us the gift of the Holy Spirit, that causes us to walk in obedience. "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" (Ezekiel 36:27). The Promised Messiah would lead the way into the realm of walking in the Spirit, to model and demonstrate what we should expect from the Holy Spirit's powerful indwelling. "Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in Whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 42:1). Before the Almighty would actually affect a change in His Covenant with man, He would prophetically warn and advertise the coming change to those that "fear Him" and "hope in His mercy" (Psalm 33:18). "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). In particular, God's New Covenant, as noted in Ezekiel 31:31, is designed to give those who receive the Covenant by faith, both His Spirit and His Word, i.e., heartfelt obedience. "As for Me, this is My Covenant with them, saith the LORD; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My Words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever" (Isaiah 59:21).



It is both amazing and saddening that the advertised benefits of the Promised Holy Spirit of the New Testament have been so little understood and accepted. "25 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. 26 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. 27 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" (Ezekiel 36:25-27). Instead of the current debate concerning the efficacy of different manifestations of being baptized with the Spirit, **Loving Obedience is the prophesied purpose of the Spirit's indwelling in the Believer.** "31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a New Covenant [literally, New Testament] with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an Husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 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. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

The concept has been lost to the Church that the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence in the Believer, is essentially to produce the sanctifying effect of True Obedience. "And he that keepeth His Commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1John 3:24). The blessing of the Holy Spirit securing us in a life of sanctification and obedience, comes through **believing** in Jesus Christ. "31 But these are written, that ye might **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** ye might have Life through His Name" (John 20:31). Clearly, *what we believe about the LORD Jesus Christ*, is what the Holy Spirit uses to enable us to overcome the temptations of the flesh, i.e., faith in Jesus as our Supply-- "my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19)-- keeps us from succumbing to the sin of worry. "1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Romans 8:1, 9).

It must be noted that the LORD Jesus told His disciples that "when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, Which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" (John 15:26). Then, "when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come" (16:13). So then, the Spirit gives us the benefit of helping us understand and believe Who and What the LORD Jesus is to us, i.e., believing in Jesus as our Wisdom-- "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption" (1Corinthians 1:30)-- keeps us from despairing of definite direction in our day-to-day lives. And, all of these benefits only come as we are taught by the Spirit from the Word of God. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance,

whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

## The Promises Encourage Us to Trust God

Which brings us to the Promises... "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" (2Peter 1:4). Truly, the Promises epitomize the fundamental idea of "according to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). God does not penalize us for the exercise of even the smallest of faith, because it is impossible to be exercising the sin of unbelief at the same time. Charles G. Finney, in the 1800's, taught the Philadelphian Age Church the Biblical concept of the Unity of Moral Action, i.e., that we cannot be both holy and sinful at the same time. Either we will serve God or mammon, but not both **at the same time**. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the One, and love the other; or else he will hold to the One, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). [Please read "[Unity of Moral Action](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html> -- by Charles G. Finney] Whenever the smallest faith is exercised in the believing of the Promises, we become more like the LORD Jesus Christ, i.e., we become "partakers of the Divine Nature" (2Peter 1:4).

Like a Divine Cycle, faith in the Promises teach us to trust in God, because "all the Promises of God in [Christ Jesus] are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2Corinthians 1:20). Building Christian Confidence is not a humanistic confidence in self, but it is the confidence that God, "that cannot lie" (Titus 1:2), will do as He said. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). The Apostle John wrote in his First Epistle that his purpose in writing, like a Divine Cycle, was to those who had already believed on the LORD Jesus, that they may further understand Him, that they would be encouraged to further trust Him. "These things have I written unto you that **believe** on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may **know** that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may **believe** on the Name of the Son of God" (1John 5:13).

Faith is inescapably tied to the Promises. "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promises" (Hebrews 6:12). The LORD will take us at whatever level of Spiritual development that we possess, and He will give further revelations of Himself, His Word, and His character. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love Him, and will manifest Myself to Him" (John 14:21). This growth "in grace" (2Peter 3:18) process is the Spiritual development of becoming "partakers of the Divine Nature" (1:4) that is brought about by the believing of the Exceeding Great and Precious Promises (1:4).

It may seem like we are not able to keep on trusting Jesus for our latest escape from difficulty; however, "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1Corinthians 10:13). And, it may seem, at times, that the Righteous are more subject to the difficulties that the wicked do not encounter, but their seeming prosperity is only for a moment, and our Spiritual development will follow us throughout Eternity. "3 For I was [wrongly] envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked... 17 Until I went

into the Sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. 18 Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places: Thou castedst them down into destruction" (Psalm 73:3, 17-18). But, our difficulties are indications that God loves us, because:

(1) Either we are being grown by the LORD through His testing of what He has already taught us, i.e.,

"3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:3-4), or

(2) We have stumbled into sin, and the Father must reclaim us through chastening, i.e.,

"6 For whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:6-7). So, the LORD will fulfill His Promise in us. "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a Good Work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

### **The Tribulation Demands a Special Promise for Escape**

Which brings us to the Promises of the Pre-Tribulational Rapture... "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He [the Holy Spirit] Who now letteth [restrains] will let [will continue to restrain through the Spirit's indwelling presence in the Believers], until He be taken out of the way [at the Pre-Tribulational Rapture]" (2Thessalonians 2:7). Though the issue of "Rapture - No Rapture" may seem to hinge only on the eschatological interpretation of when and if an event must take place, it is more than evident that the Faithful God has deemed it appropriate to make the event, a matter of faith and Promise. "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the Hour Of Temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the Earth" (Revelation 3:10). If the very reason that the LORD must bring to pass the Tribulation Week, is the unbelief of Wicked men, then the faith of the few Righteous is that much more crucial. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the Earth?" (Luke 18:8).

If we live to do the will of God, then why should it be thought strange or unworthy that we desire to escape the coming Tribulation Week? "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to **escape** all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36). Wouldn't our escape from "all these things that shall come to pass" (21:36) during the Tribulation Week, be great tribute and praise to the Faithful God for making good yet another Promise? Earlier, did we reject His Promise of escape from temptation, because we felt that it was unrealistic to attempt to live without sinning? "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to **escape**, that ye may be able to bear it" (1Corinthians 10:13). If David the Psalmist petitioned the Almighty to deliver him, then why should we not do the same? "1 In Thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. 2 Deliver me in Thy Righteousness, and cause me to **escape**: incline Thine ear unto me, and save me" (Psalm 71:1-2).

The world and Worldly Professing Christians do not have any motivation to actively claim a Promise for a Pre-Tribulational Rapture deliverance from any upcoming Tribulation, because to them it is a fanciful, unrealistic dream. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction

cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1Thessalonians 5:3). How can we **not** claim Promises for escape from a Tribulation Week, if we see the Tribulation coming? "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3; 27:12). If the Spirit of God is drawing our attention to the nearness of the LORD's Return, the Tribulation Week, and our Pre-Tribulation Rapture, then would it not be hypocritical to ignore His leading and not claim the Rapture Promises? "2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matthew 16:2-3).

And, are we not missing the point of the Tribulation Week, i.e., the Judgment that results from removing the Restraining influence through the sudden removal of the Righteous (2Thessalonians 2:7), if we do not claim Promises and pray for our miraculous, Pre-Tribulation Rapture removal? "2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you. 3 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the Earth, which have wrought His Judgment; seek Righteousness, seek Meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zephaniah 2:2-3). After all, the Rapture represents more than a parochial deliverance of a few people who would not face up to the real world. "The time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3; 22:10). Ours is to beg the LORD for usefulness and faithfulness, until the moment is most pregnant for our Rapture. "20 Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. 21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the Earth for their iniquity: the Earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isaiah 26:20-21). (Just study the number of times that David asked for deliverance from the LORD because of his enemies.)

## **Conclusion**

Faith is the divinely appointed means for us to live our lives before God. "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2Corinthians 5:7). Trusting Jesus for all things in this life and hereafter is only fitting, because He is "worthy" (Revelation 5:12). "20 For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the LORD Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21). Since only Jesus is able to subdue "all things unto Himself" (3:21) and "because He laid down His life for us" (1John 3:16), He is worthy of our trust. We ought to exercise ourselves to trust God, because it is most certain that God is working to accomplish the growth of our faith. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2Thessalonians 1:3). Our faith will grow, as our perception of our Gracious God increases. "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). It will always be in the best interests of God and our faith, that our understanding of just how great God is, increases. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2Peter 3:18).

The last test of our faith will come as we trust Jesus for our translation, either at our death or Rapture.

"And the LORD shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His Heavenly Kingdom: to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2Timothy 4:18). In the meantime, our spiritual life depends upon the grace and help of God. "For the LORD GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isaiah 50:7). It is with great confidence that we can follow in the steps of the Faithful God. "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it" (1Thessalonians 5:24). May the LORD grant to us "grace to help" (Hebrews 4:16) in our "time of need" (4:16), that we may be found faithful. "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1Corinthians 4:2).

Maranatha!