

## THE FAITH OF CHRIST.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:5.

All must admit that there can be no reliable testimony as to what constitutes the faith of Jesus and what are the evidences of its possession outside of God's Word. We must conclude therefore that he who desires that information with its bearing on his relationship to God must seek it there. To do this successfully and satisfactorily the closest scrutiny must be observed in examining not only the foundation upon which we have built, but also the material (truth or error) we have used in building thereon. Faith means belief, confidence or trust: these applied to anything would be faith; but "*the* faith" is much more than these. This faith besides believing the word of God solely, is productive of and results in the life corresponding to the character of him (Jesus) whom it lays hold on; induced by promises of God's word. First of all, however, by faith in the vicarious ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, we became reconciled and at peace with God. (Rom. 5:1-10.) In this way we became "justified freely from all things" not because of our faith but through faith and because of Jesus work of sacrifice whom we thus rely on as our substitute or ransom. Thus Jesus is made to us the only foundation of hope – "other foundation can no man lay." The faith of Christ however involves much more than acceptance of or belief in Jesus' sacrifice as the at-one-ment between us and the Father. This opened the door of favor to us, that he might become not only all that to us, but also "wisdom and knowledge and sanctification and redemption." In him are hid all these treasures which must be received by us if at all, by faith. After we became reconciled to God, our increased appreciation of the riches of his favor depended on our further progress in presenting ourselves living sacrifices "holy and acceptable to God." In this way we became sharers of THE FAITH which Jesus had; the faith of Christ, of all those who are joint-sacrifices

with Jesus and who are promised joint heir-ship, and this is *the* faith of Christ.

United with Jesus as sacrificers, we have become by THE FAITH sons of God on the divine plane. We were buried with him (Jesus) by baptism into death (Rom. 6:4) to self – the human; and as we reckoned ourselves dead, we became alive, and are living to God by *the* faith in the Son of God, being "sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise."

Having therefore the same spirit that was in Jesus, the same self-sacrificing life that characterized him will also characterize us if we abide in him and in *the* faith. And by this we shall know if we be in the faith. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, and if Christ be in you the body is dead," Rom. 8:9,10. We know we have *the* faith and *the* Spirit of Christ by its working out in us as in him, prompt obedience and willing sacrifice. This is the witness of the Holy Spirit to us. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). "By this we know ...we love God and keep his commandments, ....and [to us] his commandments are not grievous" [so that we rejoice to sacrifice in doing his will]. 1 John 5:2,3. This is also manifest to those that are without – "We are living epistles known and read of all men." "Ye shall know them by their fruits" whether THE FAITH of Christ actuates them.

A false presentation of God's character has been Satan's most powerful weapon of attack against the Christian faith. Those who have taken the torment plan of making men repent and believe the gospel have foiled their own purpose. In this they have shown less wisdom than men of the world in blackening God's character to create love, and despising the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the *goodness* of God leadeth men to repentance. Rom. 2:4. This stigma on the character of God they endeavor to excuse by saying, He must be just. They fail to notice, however, that they make him lest just than imperfect man, for in the administration of human justice *torture* is abhorrent.

Thus by false theories, and neglect of THE faith laid down in the Scripture, God's attributes are made at war with each other, and such cannot say with Paul, "I am *not ashamed* of the glad tidings...for the righteousness of God by faith is revealed therein in order to faith. Rom. 1:6. – E.D. If God therefore declare through Paul that his goodness leads men to repentance, and his righteousness is revealed for the express purpose of inducing men to have faith in him, how say some that the restraints of society would be gone if the truth were presented. In this they err greatly; God being the judge of what is best.

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