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## THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

**THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH-** *"For what saith the scriptures? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness...For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."* (Rom.4:3,13) The covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed, stands totally on faith. We could declare unequivocally that the faith of Abraham is the way to follow unto "perfection." *"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us go on unto perfection**; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permits."* (Heb.6:1-3) As long as we are still guided by a set of doctrines, (teachings), we are moving under the law. Doctrines are laws, and they are necessary for us as long as we are still growing up in Christ, but all these have to be replaced by the voice of the Spirit leading us moment by moment; this is the only way to perfection. It is by the faith of Jesus Christ that we are able to follow the voice within. It is faith that is counted for righteousness, and not how well we adhere to doctrines. When Abram was called out of his country, he was not guided by maps or previously written scriptures; he knew what to do because he heard the voice of God within him, and he took action.

Children are heirs by re-birth, and they belong to the kingdom, but they have no part in their inheritance until they become mature sons. *"For the heir, as long as he is still a child differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all."* (Gal.4:1) Many of our well-meaning ministers of the church, are afraid to let go of their children, and so we find Christians who remain as children in the pews, being taught to practice the same doctrines week after week and year after year. Some emphasize the doctrine of baptisms while others the laying on of hands and such; this is what forms denominations. Jesus said that *"Howbeit 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."* (Jn.16:13) It takes trust to follow the voice without having it in writing, yet, after we have trusted, our action will always be confirmed by the written word. The Spirit of the written word, (not the literal letter), is the second witness that establishes the voice we hear.

By the Spirit we know that we have no need to be taught over and over again to repent, to try to achieve salvation by our own works or to be reminded to have faith in God. We need to keep reaching out farther and higher into new truths as we move on. We cannot go on unto perfection by being taught repeatedly the same principles of the doctrine of Christ; we are as in a school, and we must move on to a higher grade and to a school of higher learning in order to graduate. It is easy to stop seeking and rest on our laurels, when we feel that what we see could not be any more exciting; but we must always move on and seek to know Him even better. *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out the matter."* (Prov.25:2)

**WHAT PERFECTION ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?** The word perfection in the Heb.6 verse we quoted, means "of full age, full grown, mature, complete, lacking nothing." The saints who are the witnesses on the other side of the veil, *"...obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be **made perfect**."* (Heb.11:39-40)

They could not obtain their goal of perfection, because the time of their full maturity had not yet come, and cannot actually come until all of the Word of God spoken in the beginning is fulfilled. Through suffering and faith, those who remain on earth, continue to fill up the cup of afflictions, until all is perfect. Paul wrote that he was a minister who *"... now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."* (Col.1:24) It takes a certain maturity in Christ to understand this, yet as we follow the Spirit, we find that we as well, being a vital part of this Christ body, are being led through many afflictions.

With all his understanding and revelations, Paul was still *"...pressing toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* (Phil.3:14). Even though Jesus said that for the elect sake, He would shorten the time, it is still in the appointed time that the Christ creation of God will come into completeness, and the sons of God will come into their manifestation. Until that time, we are all encouraged to continue in the faith and to fulfill our part of the Word of God. When the fulness of times is reached, then the first Adam man will be conquered in each of us, and the "Last Adam man" will appear triumphant and ready. Such is the day of His appearing that the world is so eagerly waiting for. Then the faithful who have been waiting in Jesus on the other side of the veil will be brought back, and we will all be changed into a higher dimension of life, even into the likeness of the Son of God.

Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith. It is good to encourage ourselves and one another, to move on unto this perfection. This is the vision that we need to focus upon and to follow. Our part is to keep this truth alive in our hearts, and walk and run with it. There are no works for us to do, except to stand strong in the faith, and not deviate, stray or wander until we reach that mark.

**THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST-** *"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 Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."* (Gal.2:16) *"But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."* (Gal.3:22) There are levels of faith. The faith OF Jesus Christ is not only the simple faith that believes that the Man Jesus truly existed and was crucified for our sins. The faith OF Jesus Christ is the faith of those in the cloud of witnesses that encompasses us. It is the faith of which *"...Jesus is the author and the finisher. Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame..."* (Heb.12:2) This is the faith that keeps us focused when all around us falls apart, when we are ill and hurting, when that which we cherish is taken away. It is the same faith that moved Abraham to *"...obey and to go out, not knowing whither he went...For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* The faith OF Jesus Christ is that which arises within, and causes us to stand steadfast on God's promise of making all things new in us, and raising this entire creation into a world called God's Kingdom. This is the faith that sees a church called New Jerusalem, where the Lord God almighty and the Lamb are the temple. A church where *"...there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."* (Rev.21:27) Indeed, this city, this New Jerusalem is the bride of the Lamb that shall show forth the glory of God through the ages to come. The Bible describes this in symbols, for our better understanding, but this city is a people, a government of God for the people of the whole world.

It is not likely that God would call us to leave our physical home and country, to forget our friends, those who love us and honor us, and lead us on a walk toward an unknown city, whose builder and maker is God. It was so for Abram but for us it is not, yet it is very comparable. The voice of the Spirit that moves us, will turn us away from the cheerful, animated and exciting fellowships we have gathered

with and loved. It will lead us on a quiet and lonely path toward inner contemplation toward attaining the mark of the high calling of God in Christ. This is truly the narrow path where few walk side by side with us. We will be separated from those who affirmed the same faith and followed the same teachings, and we will find ourselves alone with the Voice that sometimes seems very still and very small. In such a way, we will follow the Spirit out of our traditions, out of our churches and out of our own desires to make ourselves a name among men. This is a spiritual path. It does not call for us to physically leave our surroundings; it is an inner work of the Spirit.

**LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH-** Peter wrote *"...to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: grace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."* (II Pet.1:1-3) Many have faith, but not all have the same precious faith. We may well enjoy the fellowship with all who are in the faith, but what a joy and a treat it is to find one of the same precious faith as we. What a breath of fresh air to be able to share our same experiences and our same vision together. How strengthening to our inner man, when we find one with a heart and understanding to *"...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* (Phil.3:14). This is the faith that neither wobbles nor doubts, even through severe testing. Peter wrote, *"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, (trials). That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ...Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."* (I Pet.1:6,7,9)

Our Father does not cause sickness and pain in our bodies, but He uses these things to see if, through it all, we will still stand strong in the faith that we have professed, and know that He is still accomplishing His purpose in us. We have received the simple faith that once led us to believe and receive the forgiveness of our sins. We have had faith to receive gifts of healing for our bodies and deliverance for our souls from the Holy Spirit and we hold on to that kind of faith always. But the most precious faith is that which changes our proud spirit to the lowly nature of a lamb, one who does not defend itself, one who simply trusts and knows that the Shepherd loves him and that no matter what happens, all is working to the good. It is the faith of the Son of God in us that keeps walking the walk, looking for an eternal dwelling place, a dimension of life whose builder and maker is God. It is the faith that embraces the cross, knowing that out of this old man will arise a new creation in Christ, even life from the death. This is the faith that God's sons are holding onto at any cost.

**FAITH WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE-** *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."* (Gal.5:6) Love is the power behind faith. Faith by love overrides the Law of death. The apostle John had much to say to us about love. Throughout the Scriptures the question is heard, *"O God, who is like unto Thee?"* And the voice of a mighty prophet echoes, *"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because **he delighteth in mercy.**"* (Mic.7:18) Oh the grace and mercy of our God! David's heart rang out, *"Thy lovingkindness is better than life!"*

Jesus revealed our God as a Father who so loves His creation that He gave His Son to bring it back from the dead. It was through one man Adam, that God's entire creation fell into sins, and it is through one man Christ, that the creation is being brought back from the dead. Christ speaks of the "perfect

Man" which is the fulness of Christ, Jesus the Head and the body of sons. In the full Christ's resurrection, all are made alive again, howbeit, each in his own order. *"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (I Cor.15:21-22)* This Christ Man which is formed through the ministry of the church, *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a **perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.**" (Eph.4:13)* All this is God's love given to us all in His Son. *"And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I Jn.2:2)* Even through much hardship, Paul wrote, *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom.8:38-39)* As God reveals Himself to us through His living Word, His love is being worked into our hearts so that we can truly love Him and love one another, for we are called *"To love the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our souls, all our minds and all our strength."*

**FAITH WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE-** Paul was very concerned that the little churches that were being raised in Christ, did not find themselves, entangled again in the works of the law. He wrote, *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage...Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we by the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith that worketh by love." (Gal.5: 1,4-6)* Love is God's power to move the world. *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." (Jn.13:3)* In a recent email, John Joseph wrote, "It occurs to me that the reason the kingdom of God works and grows and prospers is very simple. It is founded on love; it is a kingdom of love. And only love gives meaning. (see 1Cor. 13). The kingdoms of this world are founded on knowledge, and no matter how much knowledge increases, if there is not love, there is NOTHING. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. The Holy Spirit is the Meaning Maker." End of quote.

Love for one another is the surest testimony and proof of our sonship. This is not love that needs to be worked up, and it is not the kind of love one "chooses;" it is a love that rises and flows out from our hearts to the hearts of our brethren, and sometimes to the entire world. It is God's love that will motivate the sons to deliver the world for it is God's purpose for the sons. This is why we were chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world. It is why we were called, predestinated, justified and glorified in Christ from the foundation of the world.

Paul wrote to Titus, *"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to **the faith of the elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, promised before the world began.**" (Titus 1:1-2)* The faith of Jesus Christ is the truth which is after godliness, that is to say, pure and unadulterated and which gives us the hope of eternal life according to God's promise. So faith gives us hope, and faith and hope are fueled by love which is called charity, which is God's love poured out to the whole world. *"And now abideth faith, hope and charity; but the greatest of these is **charity.**" (I Cor.13:13)*

"A song is not a song, until you sing it. A gate is not a gate until you swing it. Love is not put in your heart to stay. Love is not love til you give it away!" Charity is God's love in action.

Because He is love, *Angèle Caporaso (aka Jackie)*