

Who's Faith?

by Dr. Theory Stringer

Who's faith are we to live by? We live by faith the scripture says, but who's? The faith I have hasn't yet moved a mountain. What about Christ's faith? If Christ is in me didn't He bring His faith into me with Him?

Letting Him Do It

Saving [us by faith] is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving [by faith]. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing. [Eph. 2:8-10 Message]

How a Dead Person Lives

The apostle Paul tells us we have to live by faith because the “old man” died; “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” [Gal. 2:20 NKJV, emphasis added]

We Get Faith From Jesus

The faith that we live by is given to us by the Son of God and does not originate from us; Jesus is the author and finisher of it according to Heb. 12:2a (Amplified) “Looking away [from all that will distract] to Jesus, Who is the Leader and the Source of our faith and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection].”

Grace and Faith Defined

Now Grace is “*the dynamic free-flow of God's activity, consistent with His character, whereby He actuates His life within His creation by His Son, Jesus Christ.*” (1) This in essence is more than just undeserved favor, but rather it encompasses the totality of God's dynamic work in dealing

with mankind. **Faith** is simply “*receptivity to God’s activity,*” (2) that is, our being receptive to God’s dynamic working in our life.

Receptivity – A Landing Field

So this means that faith doesn’t cause God to act, but rather receives from Him; faith is like a heliport or landing field to receive aircraft. Is your heart a landing field for the Son of God to come in Power? **AND JESUS summoned to Him His twelve disciples and gave them power and authority ... to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of weakness and infirmity.** [Matt. 10:1 Amplified]

Branches Express the Vine

Jesus said in John 15:5 that He is the vine and we are **HIS** branches. Branches just don’t mysteriously appear on the vine and (**they**) decide to bear fruit, i.e. *do their thing*. The branches came [grow] from the vine, and **the vine** expresses **its’** life in and through **its’** branches. The result is not only fruit bearing, but also the living branch with leaf capturing the sun [and nourishing the body]. Everything of the branch is of [or from] the vine when the branch abides (lives, remains, stays connected) to the vine.

His New Body Working

Jesus said that we are his branches, and without Him we can do nothing [John 15:5]. It should also be noted that without us yielded to His will as His body, He can do little of a miraculous nature here on earth. A single body of Christ on earth produced the Gospels 2,000 years ago. Now many yielded believer bodies [forming a body of Christ], under the head Jesus, will do even greater things. John 14:12 (Amplified) **”I assure you, most solemnly I tell**

you, if anyone steadfastly believes in Me, he will himself be able to do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these, because I go to the Father.” That would certainly include moving mountains. The problem is not that Jesus can’t move mountains, but rather we think that we can because He is in us. Unless He **leads** us [the head of the body] to act, or to speak to mountains etc., we are just wasting our time.

Supernatural Power Manifested In You

To use a worn out cliché, “*the tail don’t wag the dog.*” **Faith is not a tool** from God that **WE** use like a magic wand or even a hand or **power** tool. Again, faith is simply “*receptivity to God’s activity.*” It is only accepting what God reveals [brings into this world from heaven] – it is saying “yes” be it done as you have said to what God is doing and what He has disclosed seeing and manifesting the invisible; making heaven visible. To that kind of faith Jesus said **“your faith (receptivity) has healed you.”** [Matt. 9:22, Mark 5:34, Luke 8:48 & 18:42 NIV].

Our Desire or His

Is moving a mountain (*or what ever it is*) something God desires to do through you, and you are hindering Him because you are not receptive to His activity? Or is moving a mountain something that you believe that **you** should be able to do because Christ is in you? God’s initiative or mine? God’s activity or mine?

Our Ability and Will Power or His

Mark 11:24 says to, **“have faith in God,”** and thus all things are possible including moving mountains. This is just being receptive to Him. **[Not in your own strength] for it is**

God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for (actually do) His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight. [Phil. 2:13 Amplified] As we are receptive to Him working in us, His desires become our desires, and His energy powers us in doing His will; thus carrying out His will and purpose. Our will and ability [“... not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit ...” Zach. 4:6 NIV] to do things must come from Him and not from our independent thinking or activities. This means that they must not come from the flesh. Only God can do what God wants done. The hand {God} animates the glove {us}.

One with God, Not Independent Islands

The real problem for most Christians when it comes down to faith or any aspect of the Christian life is that we see ourselves as little independent islands that God came to help here and there from time to time. Rather, we should be seeing ourselves as being one with Him through Christ, and He does all [His work] in and through us according to His will and purpose. We are the branches and He is the Vine. We are joined with Him by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17) and we (believers) are members of His body (the church). We are frustrated when the scriptures say that we can do certain things, and we try all that we know in our heads, not enlightened in our hearts [Eph. 1:17-18] and things still do not work according to our purposes.

Re- Presenting Christ

Christianity is not us trying to be like Jesus or even imitating Him, but rather Christ himself living and expressing His will, desires and power in us as we [branches] abide in Him [vine]. Mankind is still laboring

under the lie that we can be as God – **self-determining – being able to operate apart from God or next to God.** Even after coming to Christ, many well meaning Christians take the scriptures and try to use them as guidelines to imitate Jesus. However, we must realize that they [the scriptures] were given to us so that through them the Holy Spirit can reveal to us the living Christ Jesus [John 5:39 “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,” (NIV)] Thus, as we abide in Him, He does all things in us according to **HIS** will. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13 NKJV)

Notes:

See Christocentric Prayer

<http://www.surfinthespirit.com/spirituality/christocentric.html>

And

The Grace of God

<http://www.christinyou.net/pages/gracegod.html>

1) James A. Fowler – God wants Christians to ever remain in the context of that grace/faith position, wherein the dynamic of God's grace in Jesus Christ is applied to everything.

2) James A. Fowler – receptive/receptivity to the activity of God

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