

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

LESSON 06 - FAITH

Text: Galatians 5:22-23

Overview:

1. The great battle of our lives here upon Earth is between the flesh and the Spirit.
2. Ultimately, this is a conflict over who will reign and rule in our lives – man (the flesh) or God (the Spirit).
3. When we choose to walk after the Spirit, we will bear His fruit in our lives.
4. “The fruit of the Spirit is love.”

Introduction:

1. Faith is a foundational feature of every follower of Christ (cf. 2 Peter 1:5; Hebrews 11:1; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. However, there is much misunderstanding about faith in both the secular and religious world.
3. Thus, it is essential for the Christian to understand the true meaning of faith.

I. The Significance of Faith

- A. The Greek word is *pistis* (πίστις) which means, “persuasion, conviction of truth, trust joined with obedience.”
- B. In the New Testament, the words “faith” and “believe” are often used interchangeably.
- C. However, faith includes more than mere “mental assent” (Hebrews 11:6).
 1. Faith begins with belief (2 Corinthians 4:13).
 2. It goes deeper than mental assent to include trust (Hebrews 11:7-8).
 3. True faith always manifests itself in obedience (Matthew 9:2).
- D. In the ASV and the ESV, this word is translated as “faithfulness.”

II. The Source of Faith

- A. Many in the religious world claim that faith is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8).
 1. This is one reason why so many believe that salvation is by faith only.
 2. They say that when one repents of sins and accepts Jesus as Savior, then God gives them saving faith.
 3. So, to them, baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace (salvation) or faith (given by God).
- B. However, the Bible teaches that faith is not a gift from God.
 1. Faith comes from hearing God’s Word (Romans 10:8-17; Heb. 4:2).
 2. If faith came from God supernaturally, all would believe the same things (cf. Romans 14:22-23).
 3. If faith came from God, there would be no need for self-examination (2 Corinthians 13:5).
- C. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit produced by means of the Word of God.
- D. Many also claim that faith arises from a lack of knowledge or evidence.
- E. However, the Bible teaches that true faith is based upon knowledge.
 1. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 – “Prove all things...”
 2. John 6:68-69 – “We believe and are sure...” (Cf. John 20:30-31)

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III. The Strengthening of Faith

- A. The Bible mentions several degrees of faith.
 - 1. Little faith - Matthew 6:30; 14:31
 - 2. Great faith - Matthew 8:10; 15:28
 - 3. Weak faith - Luke 22:31-33; Romans 14:1
 - 4. Strong faith - Matthew 17:20; 21:21; Romans 4:19-20
 - 5. Perfect faith- James 2:22
 - 6. Dead faith - James 2:17, 20, 26
- B. The Bible teaches that faith can grow (Luke 17:5; 2 Thes. 1:3-4).
 - 1. Due to study...
 - 2. Due to experience... (1 Peter 1:6-7; Hebrews 5:14)
 - 3. Due to discipline... (Hebrews 12:11)
- C. True faith must involve the whole heart of man.
 - 1. The Intellect (Matthew 9:4; Mark 2:6)
 - 2. The Emotions (Matthew 22:37)
 - 3. The Conscience (1 Timothy 1:5; Titus 1:15)
 - 4. The Will (2 Corinthians 9:7; Revelation 22:17)
- D. This kind of faith will ensure victory.
 - 1. It is a firm foundation from which to engage the enemy (1 Peter 5:9).
 - 2. It is a shield for one's defense (Ephesians 6:16).
 - 3. It is an assurance of one's victory (1 John 5:4-5; 4:4; John 16:33).

IV. The Connection to Love

- A. Faith and faithfulness are permanently linked together.
- B. Faithfulness is a demonstration of love (cf. Heb. 2:14-18; John 3:16; 1 John 1:9).
- C. Faith (faithfulness) is love's manifestation!