



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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We Have Come This Far By Faith!

Scripture: Romans 1:17; Hebrews 11; 2 Peter 1:5-10

"The just shall live by faith," (Romans 1:17). Paul quoted from the Old Testament (Habakkuk 2:4, *"The just shall live by his faith,"*) revealing that righteousness (or justification) by faith has always been God's plan for us to be saved, and also how we may be made fit for eternal life. Being righteous by faith is only by God's grace, because we cannot make ourselves clean or holy before God on our own. God places His own righteousness into us when we trust in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the act of God forgiving sins and declaring us right with Him is called justification. The Bible shows that a righteous life displays specific actions and a right relationship with others: **Micah 6:8** - *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

By trusting Christ, our relationship with God is made right. **"From faith to faith"** means that **from start to finish God declares us to be righteous because of faith and faith alone**. In turn our faith will enable us to live forever. When thinking of faith, we must consider two aspects: **First**, we can speak of "the faith," which is that body of truth once delivered to the saints. The doctrines of the faith have been firmly established and are forever settled in heaven, though in prior ages they had not been fully revealed to man. We are all responsible for searching out the true doctrines of faith and embracing them for ourselves as the Spirit guides us. We must remember, however, that a doctrine does not become true simply because we believe it; **real faith is believing only what is actually true**.

Second, we can think of faith as man's active response to God's revelation of truth. In this sense Paul says, *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17). What is it we must hear for faith to come? We must hear the **true gospel** of Jesus Christ, for how shall we believe in Him of whom we have not heard, and how shall we hear without a preacher? It is so necessary that we always preach the gospel fully, clearly, accurately, and passionately, for it is the preaching of the gospel that reveals Jesus Christ and the righteousness that only He can give. The nature of genuine, biblical faith is misunderstood by many today. Some call faith a simple acceptance of truth. Others call faith a verbal confession of truth. From a biblical perspective, faith dwells in the heart, not the head or the mouth, *"for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness"* (Romans 10:10). **As we believe the words of the gospel and respond to its call to repentance and water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, God responds by imparting to us His gracious gift of righteousness, which is infused into our souls by the forgiveness of our sins and the indwelling of the Spirit of God.**

God's way of making people right with Him comes through faith in Jesus Christ, completely apart from trying to earn it by obeying religious laws. **This saving grace is available to everyone—both Jew and Gentile—because all people are equal in a need for a Savior.** Trying to be right with God by our own effort doesn't work. Good intentions such as *"I'll do better next time"* or *"I'll never do that again"* usually end in failure. Paul pointed to Habakkuk's declaration (Habakkuk 2:4) that **by trusting God—believing in His provision for our sins and living each day in His power—we can break this cycle of failure.**

Faith means resting in what Christ has done for us in the past, but it also means trusting Him for what He will do for us in the present and in the future (Romans 8:12-25; Galatians 3:10-13). Turning away, shrinking back, or quitting out of fear or doubt shows a lack of loyal trust in God. God is deeply displeased when someone who knows the truth chooses to retreat or abandon their trust under pressure.

Two words describe our faith: confidence and certainity. These two qualities need a secure beginning and ending point. The **beginning point** of faith is believing in God's character—He is who He says. The **ending point** is believing in God's promises—He will do what He says. When we believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don't see those promises materializing, we demonstrate true faith (John 20:24-31). Faith must be more than belief in certain facts; it must result in action, growth in a saint's character, and moral discipline, or it will die away (James 2:14-17). A life of faith leads to learning to know God better, developing patience, doing God's will, and loving others. These actions do not come automatically; they require hard work. They are not optional; all of them must be a continual part of our lives. We don't finish one and start on the next, but we work on them all together. **God empowers and enables us, but He also assigns us the responsibility of learning and growing.** We should not be surprised or resentful of the process.