

Jesus Christ Prison Ministry

P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356



FAITH

PUBLISHER
Jesus Christ Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

E-mail: ministry@icpm.com
Web Page: www.icpm.com



FAITH

“According to your faith will it be done to you.” Matthew 9:29. Jesus teaches us to have faith. Jesus was a strong believer in faith. “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He **rewards** those who **earnestly** seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6.

FAITH: The word faith is used frequently. All my life while growing up in a Christian home I heard the word. Not until I stepped into prison did I stop to think what it meant. Sitting in a lonely cell I began to evaluate what I had been taught and where the teaching had gone wrong. It was at this point that I began to study the Bible in earnest to learn what had been missing in my “Christian” upbringing.

Living in prison I began to see that prisoners experience the concept of faith to a greater degree than most people in a free society. In prison there are limits and lines of demarcation. A prisoner has faith that if he disobeys the rules he will suffer severe consequences. Therefore he rarely breaks the rules. A prisoner has faith that if he crosses the perimeter line or climbs the fence he will be shot. This produces obedience and he does not cross the line or climb the fence. A prisoner has faith in the system that if he behaves in a certain manner he will be rewarded and/or paroled earlier. His faith leads him to **obey** and perform certain acts.

In reading the Bible, I discovered that this is precisely the way faith in God is to be understood. I am to practice “**obedience that comes from faith.**” Romans 1:5. Romans 1:17 states, “The righteous will live by faith.”

Romans 1:17 is interesting. Paul is quoting from the Old Testament. I went back to the Old Testament to see what light could be shed on this

word “faith”. Habakkuk said, “But the righteous will live by *his* faith.” Habakkuk 2:4. The word “his” is not referring to a deity, but to you and me. That is interesting. You and I will live (eternally) by “our” faith. The word faith also had an interesting concept. In the Strong’s Concordance, the definition for this word “faith” is:

“faithfulness, truth, faithfully, faithful, faith, stability, steady, truly, verily.”

It gives the concept of firmness, fidelity, steadfastness, and steadiness. Faithfulness is the primary meaning. When you put all the meanings together one begins to see that the modern churches have misunderstood the concept of faith. Faith is not a “belief” but an “act”; faithfully discharging one’s duty. Work! A person who is faithful is a person who can be counted on to be obedient, trustworthy, reliable and determined to do what is right. You might say he is faithfully **working out** his faith. “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...” Hebrews 12:2. If we claim to have faith, we must have evidence that our faith is well placed.

Related Texts

LEVITICUS 6:2

NUMBERS 5:6

NUMBERS 12:7

HEBREWS 11

REVELATION 2:19

1 CHRONICLES 5:25

1 CHRONICLES 10:13, 14

ROMANS 1:5

JAMES 2:22

REVELATION 14:12

REAL LIFE SITUATION

You see a man get into his car. He puts the key into the ignition and for 30 minutes he turns, turns and turns the key. Nothing happens. You move closer to see if you can help. As he turns the key, you hear nothing – no sound. You move closer and ask if

there is a problem that you can help with. He answers politely that there is no problem, all is just fine.

What would you think of this man?

You ask the man why he continues to turn the key when it is obvious nothing is working? He replies that there is no problem. He tells you that the instructions he got with the car told him to have faith and it would work just fine. He says that he is practicing his faith and all is well.

Now what do you think about him?

Seeing the instructions lying on the dashboard, you gently reach in and take them to read. The instructions say, “Have faith, **in the following procedures**, and the car will work just fine:

- 1) **flip blue switch under dash to connect ignition switch with battery.**
- 2) **Insert key and turn.**

Now what do you think of this man?

Yet over and over again we see people going to church, reading the Bible and praying. Doing the many “acts” without results. The life is still bound by sin, miserable, full of pain and sickness. If this sounds familiar and you see it taking place in your life, isn’t it time to take a hard look at the instructions again? Maybe you missed something. Maybe faith isn’t just “believing”, but believing what the manual **says** and **obeying** it.

When I landed in prison I realized that something was wrong. I made a decision to throw out the knowledge that my pastor, church and denomination had taught me and to study the instructions for truth. I wanted to know what went wrong. Either the Bible was a lie or the people who were telling me their “truth” were liars. I opened my Bible to begin an odyssey that changed my life. “Then you will know the truth, and the **truth will set you free.**” John 8:32. I found the truth and it did set me free.

Faith is being “**sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” Hebrews 11:1. The key words are “**sure**” and “**certain**”. How many times would you flip a light switch on and off, on and off, before you lost faith and quit if it did not turn on the light? Two times? Three times? How many times before you were **sure** and **certain** that it did not work? Then what would you do? Change the light bulb and put in a new one that worked? In the Christian walk, why do people cling to their belief that doesn’t work? Why not dump it and get one that works?