

Holy Spirit Inspires Active Faith

(For Answered Prayer)

S382R
(Romans 1:16-19)

The main subject of the apostle Paul's letter to the Romans was to explain that Salvation comes through faith or our actions of faith, working through our love for Christ, because we believe He has died for us to free us from the bondage of sin.

"For I am not ashamed of the Good News." It is God's power which is at work for the salvation of every one who believes (the Jew first, and then the Gentile). For in the Good News a righteousness which comes from God is being revealed, depending on faith, and tending to produce faith; as the Scripture has it, "The righteous man shall live by faith." (Rom 1:16-17).

Therefore, because of one's true love for Christ, the Holy Spirit would compel them to die to sin, and faithfully obey the commands that He has given us and has instructed us to follow, in His Good News message.

"He who has my commandments and obeys them, he it is who loves Me." Jesus said, (John 14:21), and, "He who has no love for me does not obey my teaching" (24) "He who has my commandments", means, he who believes the words of Jesus and repents. So, they would be inspired through the Holy Spirit with an active faith, or a working faith that enables one to obey His teaching. That is the Good News that Paul speaks of in His letter to the Romans, which inspires righteousness within a person who truly believes in Christ and has sincerely repented. That is getting a right start in the Christian life of faith. It is not of ourselves that we can exert an active, obedient faith in Christ, resulting in righteousness like that of faithful Abraham, who first believed God, and was then made righteous by God. It is accepting Christ's words and believing that what He did for us, has pardoned and cleansed us. That is what enables the Holy Spirit to inspire one from within.

God's divine order and plan for those who

believe and accept the Good News message into their heart, is, as Peter told the believers in the crowd, (Acts 2:38-41), "Repent," replied Peter, "and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, with a view to the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you belongs the promise, and to your children, and to all who are far off, whoever the Lord our God may call." And with many more appeals he solemnly warned and entreated them, saying, "Escape from this crooked generation." Those, therefore, who joyfully welcomed his Message were baptized; and on that one day about three thousand persons were added to them.

With the gift of the Holy Spirit within, all these new believers in the faith, could now be empowered by the leading of the Holy Spirit within themselves, to live a righteous life "in Christ Jesus", and be saved from condemnation (as we are told in Romans 8:1). It was their free-will choice to joyfully accept the Good News of Christ's Message, and to repent, and be in a position to receive and be guided by the Holy Spirit in a life of faith and trust. It also remained their free-will choice to remain committed to following and trusting in Christ with the Holy Spirit's guidance or turn away from believing in and following their Shepherd, and so lose the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

When one begins trusting in other things, people, and plans of man, they have turned away from obeying and following their Lord and Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Their Shepherd cannot help them, if they do not choose to continue to follow Him in faithful obedience and trust. "If you obey my commandments, you will continue in my love, as I have obeyed my Father's commandments and continue in His love." Jesus said. (John 14:10) And (John 3:16, tells us) "For so greatly did God love the world that He gave His only Son, that everyone who trusts in Him may not perish, but may possess the life of the ages."

God showed His love by giving His Son to die for us, and His Son promises that His love will continue for us, if we obey Him. It only takes a willingness and commitment on our part to follow Him in obedient faith and trust, and the Holy Spirit will do the rest, by inspiring us to be able to obediently follow the Savior.

Jesus also explained that the Spirit whom His Father would send upon His request, is for those who love and obey Him, those in the faith, not for unbelievers. (John 14:21) "He who has my

commandments and obeys them--he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will clearly reveal myself to him.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus to a *true believer*.

From the above verses we can see that obedience and an *active* (or *working*) *faith* or *trust*, (as inspired by the Holy Spirit), cannot be separated. They run hand-in-hand throughout the Bible, as we can realize from the examples of faith in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, King David, Samuel, and others in the faith. “All these died in possession of faith.” and “He has now prepared a city for them.” (Heb.11:39-40) “And although by their faith all these people won God's approval, none of them received the fulfillment of His great promise; for God had provided for them and us something better, so that apart from us they were not to attain to full blessedness.” (Jesus had not yet sacrificed His life to pay for their sins.)

It was (and still is) The *Holy Spirit Who inspires* and *enables faith* in the heart of one who believes on the Word of God, and in the Son of God. Without the Holy Spirit (which is not for unbelievers, as Jesus said), one cannot live a life of faith in Jesus Christ.

When one chooses to trust in other people and things instead of trusting on God's faithfulness to His Promises, and they begin accumulating treasures, and laying up treasures (which could be trusted on in the future), like savings accounts, or, they accept financial and other types of insurance plans (for security) and designed to protect one's interests financially (instead of truly believing that God will protect them), or, one chooses to use safety devices to protect from unexpected mishaps, which God has promised to protect the believer from, (and the 'list of idols' could go on), then they have expressed their free-will choice to place their faith on some thing or person, instead of on God.

When one's faith is placed in the wrong place, it is in some measure a form of idolatry, and if not corrected, can effectively hinder the Holy Spirit from working with them and enabling one to exert active or working faith in their life. Faith unaccompanied by corresponding actions is really 'no faith' at all (apostle James concluded). In referring to Abraham's faith in God, he said, “Do

you see that faith was working together with his *actions*, and by such works (or *actions*), faith was made perfect?”

Abraham's faith was inspired by the Spirit of God, because he first *believed God's Word* when God spoke to him. Through believing, God's Spirit enabled Abraham to walk in faith for the rest of his life, and to pass every test of his faith in God.

The Israelites in the desert, did not believe God's Word given through Moses, so they also could not obey Him, and wandered about depending on their stubborn self-will, trying to get what they needed.

“The righteous shall live by faith.” Paul explained. (Rom.1) And he said, “For I am not ashamed of the Good News. It is God's power which is at work for the salvation of everyone who believes, the Jew first, and then the Gentile. For in the Good News a righteousness which comes from God is being revealed, depending on faith, and tending to produce faith; as Scripture has it, ‘*The righteous man shall live by faith.*’ For God's anger is being revealed from Heaven against all impiety” (meaning a lack of reverence for God), “and against the iniquity of men who through iniquity suppress the truth. God is angry: because what may be known about Him is plain to their inmost consciousness; for He Himself has made it plain to them.” (vs.16-19).

Here we see, that already, in the first century after Christ died on the Cross for the people on this earth, to atone for their sins, and, to attract them to Him in humble reverence, people were already perverting His wonderful *grace* as an excuse for sin, for as the apostle said, they “through iniquity suppress the Truth”. Thus, God's anger against sin, was already being revealed against the sins of men, less than thirty years after His Son had died to take away their sins.

Paul and Barnabas warned people at the town of Antioch to beware not “to refuse to *believe*, though it be fully declared to you,” that “through this Jesus forgiveness of sins is announced to you; and in Him every believer is absolved from all offences.” They encouraged people to remain believers in faithful obedience to Christ, and they urged the “devout converts from heathenism” in the town, “to hold fast to the grace of God.” (Acts 13:43)

The unbelieving Jews, “filled with angry jealousy, opposed Paul’s statements, and abused him. Then, throwing off all reserve, Paul and Barnabas said, ‘We were bound to proclaim God’s Message to you first. But since you spurn it and judge yourselves to be unworthy of the Life of the Ages--well, we turn to the Gentiles. For such is the Lord’s command to us. ‘I have placed Thee,’ He says of Christ, ‘as a light to the Gentiles, in order that Thou may be a Savior as far as the remotest parts of the earth.’”

So, a true Christian should be wary of ever grieving the Holy Spirit because of their disregard for the Truth of God’s Word, always resulting in disobedience and unfaithfulness to His Word. And, most importantly, the loss of the Holy Spirit’s guidance within themselves, to protect them from the ‘deceiving spirit’ of ‘the devil’.

Instead, a true Christian would want to be able (by the Spirit’s guidance) to discern the difference between true, obedient *works* of real active faith, and the mere outward *works of man* which have no spiritual value about them.

As mentioned in a previous lesson, the second chapter of the book of James gives a direct teaching on this subject of an active faith, which clearly explains how real faith in God works in the heart of a *believer*. Those passages of inspired Scriptures that the apostle used to explain the *works of real faith* (to the members of the Church in the first century), should also enlighten us to that important Truth.

The word *works* used in these passages, means *actions*, and the Truth that James is trying to impress on our minds, is that no deliverance or real results will come to anyone, who is simply saying they believe God’s promises, and who does not begin to act as if they are believing. Thus (he concluded), that faith unaccompanied by actions is dead, or really is no faith at all. (James 2:20-22) says, “But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by *works* when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his *works*, and by works, faith was made perfect?”

The perfection of Abraham’s faith was counted unto Him as righteousness because he believed. And because he *believed*, he was able to obey God (Heb.11:8-9 explains). Abraham’s

righteousness continued because of his *choice* to believe and obey God, thus, he remained in *active faith*, (he is already in Heaven, as Jesus revealed). (Vs 22) assures and gives encouragement, by saying to us, that our faith will be perfected via our acting it out. If we show real faith, we can have the full deliverance that we are seeking.

This vital principle is not recognized by multitudes of people, who are not acting in accordance with their professed faith. The average professed Christian claims to be trusting and believing in God, but in time of trial and temptation they are turning their trust to other things instead of God. We see them acting entirely different from the faith they profess to have, because they are seeking help from one of many ‘plans of man’, instead of seeking help from God.

A *faith* that simply believes that Jesus came here and died for our sins and rose from the dead that we might also be resurrected, and who believes the historical account of his life on this earth, is not a saving faith.

We must act as if we truly believe those statements about what Christ has done for us. This *believing*, in itself, would cause us to serve and trust the Living God for everything. [Everything in the true Christian life is by faith, and we cannot remind ourselves too often].

When we refuse to place our trust in something or someone else besides God, and our actions correspond with our faith, that is not *outward works*, rather it shows that “those who possess faith are true sons of Abraham.”

Anything else (the *ways and plans* of man) that we would trust in, would become an idol in our life, and that idol (if not gotten rid of) will come between us and the Living God. God’s commandment is to believe in and trust on His Son, our Savior and Lord. Acting out our faith causes us to serve and trust our God for everything in our life.

If our *place of trust* is in the wrong place, and we are only outwardly professing to be trusting in God’s Son, then we have become estranged from Christ (as Paul explained). Jesus said, (John 14:17), “That Spirit the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. You know Him because He remains by your side and is in you.” (The Spirit inspires active faith

in the *Son of God*, not trust in other things or persons.)

The Bible has many examples of how faith and actions were always linked together, and how they proved successful. (In Mark 2:) The lame man had an active faith, when he was brought by four men, and let down through the roof at the feet of Jesus, because he truly believed that the Son of God would heal him. Jesus knew the man's heart, so he told him that his sins were forgiven, "Why does this man use such words?" the Scribes reasoned, "Who but God can pardon sins?" "Why do you thus argue in your minds?" Jesus asked them. (In other words, why are you questioning God's Word? But He could see that the lame man was not questioning His Word.)

Jesus said, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to pardon sins" He turned to the paralytic and said, "To you I say, 'Rise, take up your mat and go home.'" The man rose, and immediately under the eyes of all took up his mat and went out, so that they were all filled with astonishment, gave the glory to God, and said, "We never saw anything like this." Take notice of the *works of faith* in this example, the moment the man believed the words of Jesus, and acted upon them, new life, health, and strength came into his body.

Jesus also perceived that the ten lepers had faith for healing, so he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the Priests." And while on their way to do this, they were made clean. (Luke 17:14) There was no evidence of healing, but they used their power of choice to believe His Word and went away acting exactly the same as if they already had the healing. "As they went, they were cleansed." Let us notice what Jesus said to the one cleansed man who came back to thank Him. (Vs 19) "And He said to him, 'Rise and go: your faith has cured you.'" He wasn't having faith that he would be healed. He showed faith that he was already healed. It was an *active faith*!

The nobleman came to Jesus (John 4:47-50) and asked Him to heal his son. Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." (No assurance in that reply.) But the man pleaded, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus then gave the man His Word (which is His Promise). "You may return home, your son has recovered."

Here is where we can see the *works of faith* taking action, as the man believed the words of the Son of God. (His written Word, should mean the same to us in this day and age, as His spoken Word meant to that man whose boy was dying.)

The first action of faith is not to doubt. This applies to every personal deliverance that is in the Atonement of Christ; namely, a divine right to be righteous and have God's peace within us, also the supply of financial needs, His promise of perfect health, or any other scriptural request. We are to have faith without doubting and enjoy our Atonement rights.

The second action is to rejoice, praise, and thank God for the deliverance (before we see or feel the deliverance), like King Jehoshaphat did when three large armies had come against Judah.

The third action is not to just say that we believe our prayer is answered, but to act up to all that the answer means to us.

Jesus gave us the condition for receiving our answers to prayer, (Mark 11:24), "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them." It is the active faith or works of faith that is the step unto victory!! It is a Bible promise, which is in God's Word, and He is forever faithful to His Promises.

S382R-Main Points

HOLY SPIRIT INSPIRES ACTIVE FAITH (Answered Prayer)

1. Because of one's sincere love for Christ, the Holy Spirit inspires active faith in Christ within a person, which leads us to Salvation.
2. Obedient faith never puts trust on something other than God's Promises, and the power of Jesus' Blood which supports those Promises.
3. Faith is always in the unseen results of trusting and we should rejoice and give thanks before we see the results.
4. Getting a 'right start' in the Christian life, always begins with Repentance, and Believing on what Christ has already done for us through His death and resurrection!

www.fcgchurch.org

PO Box 24283

Philadelphia, PA 19120

fcgchurch1@gmail.com

S381R 0911 24W

The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia