

Precious Faith

Introduction

Scripture Reading: **2 Peter 1:1-10**

Augustine:

Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of faith is to see what we believe.

We can find out a lot about the author of the book of 2 Peter in the opening verse.

2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have **obtained like precious faith with us** by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

- A. We see that Peter is both an apostle and a servant of Jesus Christ.
- B. He realizes also the deep faith and devotion he has toward God and writes this letter to those that “have obtained like precious faith.”
 - 1) The NASB reads “received a faith of the same kind as ours.”
2. Peter mentioned the blessings that are involved for those that possess this kind of faith and that is that one might “become partakers of the divine nature”, **having escaped the** “corruption that is in the world through lust.” **(vs 4)**

3. The word “faith” has different uses in scripture.

A. It refers to the faithfulness of God in Romans 3:3.

Romans 3:3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

B. In Galatians 1:23 it refers to the doctrine of the gospel.

Galatians 1:23 But they were hearing only, He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

4. We could study the terminology of “precious faith” from the meaning of either of these but I would like to study it from the meaning as spelled out in Romans 1:12.

Romans 1:12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

A. This is a faith that encourages one another.

How Can One Obtain “Precious Faith?”

1. **There is only one way that faith can be obtained and that is through the Bible.**

Romans 10:17

2. **Once one hears and obtains faith, then we can be assured of our hope and conviction.**

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

3. **Let's notice the following passages:**

John 20:30-31

Romans 1:16-17

John 17:20 I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

4. **Faith is not a gift. By that I mean unconditional (if so, then all would believe in Jesus).**
 - A. **One does not get faith in answer to a prayer.**
 - B. **You can only gain faith and grow in faith through the testimony of Jesus Christ.**
 - C. **When one accepts the testimony of Jesus Christ and others who were inspired “preaching Jesus”, and rely upon that faith and trust, then one will have faith and see it grow!**

Why Is Our Faith Precious?

1. Without faith, we cannot please God.

Hebrews 11:6

- A. A person's prayer will not do any good if they do not already have faith in God to "direct their steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).
- B. Every step of our relationship to God is a step of faith as we read in Romans 1:16-17.
- C. To act by faith, we must act by the authority of the word (Romans 10:17) and also:

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

- D. Faith and opinion may not harmonize.

2. Our faith is precious because we are justified by it.

- A. The gospel is **the** faith - it's God's plan of justification.
- B. We are not justified by works of the law.

Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law **but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

- C. We are also not justified by the works of our own choosing in a matter either.
Romans 10:1-4

- D. It is clear that we are then justified by faith as we see in Romans 5:1. In this passage the word “faith” is talking about the whole system of God by doing what the word instructs us to do.**

Romans 5:1 Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

- E. To be justified by faith means to have complete obedience of faith as pointed out in the following passages.**

Acts 6:7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were **obedient to the faith**.

Romans 1:5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for **obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,

Romans 16:26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **for obedience to the faith**—

- 1) An example of those that have obtained obedience of faith by having “faith in the faith” is mentioned by Paul: Galatians 3:26-27**

3. Our faith is precious because we live by faith (Romans 1:17)

- A. This is the same as walking by faith.**

2 Corinthians 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight--

Galatians 2:20 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.

B. Christ dwells within our hearts by faith.

Ephesians 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts **through faith**; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

C. Every action that we do “in faith” is motivated by heaven’s directions - by the word of God.**4. Our faith is precious because we realize that it is necessary to gain our final victory!**

1 John 5:4 For whatever is **born of God overcomes the world**. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

**A. However, we must be careful. Our faith can be overthrown.
1 Timothy 1:18-19**

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times **some will depart from the faith**, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

**B. Not only can one’s faith be overthrown if we’re not careful but it can be corrupted.
Hebrews 3:12-13**

2 Timothy 2:18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they **overthrow the faith of some**.

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Inactivity Can Render One Worthless

1. We have looked at how important and precious faith is. One who is filled with faith will want to follow God's directions.
 - A. However, some do not continue to do the things which will make their faith grow and settle into "inactivity" which will eventually make one worthless.
 - B. Notice what James says about faith and works.
James 2:14-26
2. Our faith is only precious when it works through love for one another.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

3. Many who have obtained a "precious faith" have failed to keep it, cultivate it, and make it grow.
 - A. Therefore, their faith has become vain and their service to God a thing of the past.

Conclusion

1. Have you obtained a "precious faith?"
2. Are you keeping that faith and putting it to work in God's service.
 - A. If your faith in God is truly "precious," it will be working through love!

