

Live by Faith

We trust in the God who reaches out and receives us to Himself just as we are.

“Faith” is a word the apostle Paul often used in his writing. It simply means belief or absolute trust—the word also implies loyalty and commitment. In 1 Corinthians 15:17, Paul told the church in Corinth that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, their faith was meaningless—all that they believed was utterly useless.

Genuine faith acknowledges that the message of Jesus’ death and resurrection is absolutely true. It begins when we’re receptive—willing to listen. It happens when we say, “Not only does it make sense to me, but I’m willing to stake my life on it.”

Paul quoted from Habakkuk 2:4 and said that the uncompromisingly righteous shall live by faith and faithfulness. One way to think of the uncompromisingly righteous is to think of those who are made right by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

If we are made right, it means that God treats us as though we are not and have never been sinners. He treats us as His own beloved children.

Instead of being God’s enemies, we’re His friends. We serve Him instead of resisting or fighting Him.

When Paul says the one “who through faith is just and upright shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17, The Amplified Bible), he means that those of us who have been made right with God live

by our faith. That is, we live by our trust in the God who reaches out to us with loving and open arms, ready to receive us to Himself just as we are.

Sadly, many believers fall prey to the enemy. Instead of focusing on all that God has done for them, they listen to the devil whisper, "Do you remember when you lost your temper?" "You're worried about paying your bills, and if you worry, you don't have faith. Don't you know that?" "You're supposed to be a Christian, so how could you have said what you did?"

The torments are there, and Satan never overlooks an opportunity to remind us of past failures. All of us have failed, and we will continue to fail, but when we do, we can repent and move on.

I went through a particularly difficult time several years ago when there was absolutely no joy or peace in my life. I repeatedly asked the Lord what was wrong with me, really wanting to know what my problem was. I was working so hard to please the Lord and trying to be the kind of Christian I thought I should be, but I felt as though I was making no progress at all.

Then one day, I came across Romans 15:13 in a box of Scripture cards: "May the God of your hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing [through the experience of your faith] that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound and be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope." That was it. I got it.

I had plunged into doubt and unbelief, allowing the devil to torment me with his evil lies. As a result, I had become negative, grouchy, short-tempered and impatient. I was making

myself miserable, and the devil was thrilled about the grip he had on me!

God's Word changed all that old thinking. I knew the answer. Jesus loved me so much that He not only forgave all my sins of the past but also looked ahead and forgave me for those moments of weakness when I'd fail in the future. I'm not referring to deliberate sin, but to human weaknesses—those times when I just don't live up to all the truth I know.

"Just think," I told my husband, "2,000 years ago Jesus died on the cross not only for all my sins before I even knew Him, but also for all of my sins and failures until the day I meet Him face to face." That was such a powerful thought to me. I don't have to allow Satan to sneak in with questions or unbelief.

I can live every moment moving from faith to faith to more faith. You can too.

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