

## **BELIEVERS LIVE BY THEIR FAITH NOT WORKS**

**Galatians 3:1-5**

**(Not entirely original with me)**

**Introduction:** It is not unusual to see churches split and some of the congregation form another "church" because some "leader" has convinced them that this or that is wrong or that this or that is the way things ought to be. The early church had the same problem for there were some who believed that faith wasn't enough to save and that there needed to be certain rituals and that they needed to keep all the law requirements in order to be "really" saved. That false belief is still around today but if a person would take a good look at a true Christian's life, he/she would see that it is FAITH alone that brings acceptability by God.

### **I. BELIEVERS MUST THINK THINGS THROUGH OR BE DECEIVED**

1. Not thinking things through, just accepting whatever is seen, heard or read is dangerous and is what has caused all the disharmony in the Church and among "believers."
2. Not thinking things through causes one to be misled and deceived by "false" teachers/preachers.
  - The early church had those who were teaching that believers must keep up the rituals, that they must do good works and to keep all the law in order to be accepted by God.
  - Those not thinking things through are led astray easily.
3. Not thinking things through is plain disobedience.
  - Nowhere in God's Word does it teach that by works one becomes acceptable to God, yet there were many who followed the false teachings because they just didn't think through what they had heard.
  - Knowing that God loves, that Jesus died for one's sins, that believing in Jesus brings cleansing and acceptance by God and that salvation comes ONLY through Jesus' sacrificial death, how can a person be led into false teachings?
  - If a person does not think test, try, think through what he/she sees, hears and reads, and simply believes everything then that person will indeed be led away from the truth.

### **II. THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS THE BELIEVER BY THE BELIEVER'S FAITH, NOT WORKS**

1. It is impossible for any person to "earn, win, or deserve" the Holy Spirit, just as it is with salvation.
  - Everyone is :
    - selfish, greedy, lustful, undisciplined, impure, unjust, negative, immoral, unrighteous, imperfect and unholy
  - No person has ever become a Christian and received the Holy Spirit by good works or by keeping the laws.
  - God counts a person righteous when he/she believes and loves His Son, Jesus, not by any works performed or laws kept.
    - Romans 10:14-17
2. The Holy Spirit is the gift from God through one's faith in Jesus Christ and cannot be earned or deserved in any way.
  - John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 John 2:27

### **III. IT IS BY FAITH THAT THE BELIEVER GROWS AND MATURES SPIRITUALLY**

1. It is not by efforts, works, goodness, discipline, morality, just behavior that one grows spiritually, no matter how much one tries.
  - Nothing one can do can make him/her perfect nor impart eternal life to him/her.

- No matter how many works of the law will any one ever become acceptable to God.
- 2. The only way a believer can grow and mature spiritually is to focus one's mind and life upon Jesus.
  - One must keep his/her mind and thoughts upon Jesus and make every thought obedient to Jesus.
    - 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8
  - One praises, honors, worships, asks for help and guidance all day long.
    - Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10; 1 Timothy 4:15; 2 Peter 3:18
  - The person who focuses his/her love, attention and life upon the Lord Jesus Christ is accepted by God and one day God will bring perfection to that believer.
    - Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2

#### **IV. IT IS BY FAITH THAT THE BELIEVER ENDURES SUFFERINGS**

1. Every believer who truly tries to follow Jesus' example will have some degree of suffering to bear.
  - Some suffering will come from separating one's self from the world and its ways.
  - Some suffering will come when one denies him/her self.
  - Some suffering will come when one puts aside his/her own will and way every day.
  - Some suffering will come when everything is given to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - No matter what suffering may come, it is worth it all for Jesus Christ is worth suffering anything and everything for.
    - Matthew 5:11; 10:22; 19:29; Luke 9:23-25; 2 Corinthians 4:11

#### **V. THROUGH THE BELIEVER'S FAITH GOD IS ABLE TO DO GREAT THINGS**

1. No one who has ever benefited from God's power has earned it, won it, or deserved it.
  - When one prays to God asking for this or that and God answers that prayer, it is not because the one praying has earned a favor from God.
    - Matthew 21:22; Luke 11:9; John 3:16; 5:24; 15:7; Ephesians 3:20
2. When one puts his/her faith in Jesus, God saves, when one prays in faith, God answers.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. There are many false additions to the Christian faith which have led many weak believers away from the truth.
2. Christians need to try, to test, to think through any teaching or preaching that seems different from what the Scriptures have to say.
3. The Christian grows spiritually not by his/her works, but by his/her faith and obedience in following Jesus' example.
4. Works have nothing to do with becoming a Christian, being filled with the Holy Spirit or gaining God's blessings.
5. As a person's faith is, so is his/her productivity for the Lord.
6. How is YOUR faith? Is it strong? Do you need to exercise it more?
7. One's faith is what gets him/her through the difficulties of life and brings a closeness to God.

