

THE RIGHT ORDER

John 3:16; 14:6; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8-9

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Which comes first is it "Feelings?" What about "Faith?" Then "Facts" are involved, so what is the right order for our character and life? Many people want to put "feelings" first and live their lives on how they feel about things. Then others try to put "faith" first but don't consider the facts upon which they might build their faith upon. No doubt there is a proper order for these three important parts of one's life to be in and there is but one order for them to be in that will bring blessings and comfort to the believer. So, what is the right order?

I. GOD'S FACTS ARE PERMANENT

1. Facts are like stepping stones across a stream. You step on one, then another, then another and keep on stepping on just one stone at a time until you are across the stream. You don't need your feelings nor your faith to just step on the stones, one at a time.
2. **It is a fact that God loves each of us.**
 - A person may not believe it nor feel it but that doesn't alter the fact that God loves him/her.
3. **It is a fact that through Jesus everything has been removed that might hinder one's immediate forgiveness and acceptance by God.**
 - A person may not believe this, or feel the joy that can happen, but that does not change a single fact.
4. **It is a fact that the very instant a person believes in Jesus Christ, he/she is born into God's family.**
 - A person may not feel as if he/she deserves to be a child of God and may feel like he/she is more like the prodigal son, but that doesn't alter the fact that he/she has a place in the family of God.
5. **It is a fact that God takes whatever we give as soon as we give it.**
 - When a person goes to God in prayer and offers him/herself, God accepts that person's offer.
 - God takes us at our word and we don't have to prove anything to Him.
6. **It is a fact that in Jesus Christ, the believer has a place in Heaven.**
 - It may be hard to believe and hard to enjoy the blessedness of being a part of Heaven, but nevertheless, heaven is the believer's rightful place in God's divine plan.
7. **It is a fact that the believer shares in Heavenly gifts.**
 - Grace has been given, the Holy Spirit has indwelt every believer and has given at least one gift to be used in his/her service for the Lord Jesus.
 - God has opened the Heavenly storehouse to every believer and he/she has but to ask and it shall be given.
 - It may be hard to believe that so much is available for him/her as gifts from God, but it's true.

II. FAITH LOOKS AT THE FACTS

1. **Faith is more than some statement about a person or situation.**
 - Faith is belief in a person, Jesus Christ.
 - Do not believe only ABOUT Jesus, but IN Him.
2. **Faith concerns itself with a person.**
 - Faith rests on the person (Jesus) who died on the cross, who was resurrected, who ascended, who lives to make intercession.

- Faith does not rest in statements about Jesus, but in Him, of whom the statements are made.
- 3. True faith rests on God's Faith.**
 - Often we lose heart and hope, our hearts grow faint, but God remains faithful and cannot be any different. God cannot disown any believer, any Child of His.
 - God cannot shun or avoid responsibilities for those whom He has adopted into His family.
 - Our faith may teeter, grow weak and question, but God's Faith remains steady, therefore let us put our faith on God's Faith.
 - 4. Don't worry about your own faith, rest on God's Faithfulness.**
 - Remember when Jesus told Peter to step out of the boat on to the stormy sea?
 - Any time you "step out of the boat" onto stormy "waters," don't rely on your faith, rely on God's faithfulness and ability to get you through whatever it is you are entering.
 - 5. Faith produces more faith.**
 - When faith in God has proven God's faithfulness to a person, he/she can't help but have more faith and be closer to the Lord Jesus.
 - When the believer receives God's grace, his/her heart can't help but speak out in some way.
 - 6. Faith reaches out like a hand.**
 - Faith not only recognizes that God is faithful and that God is the source of one's total needs, faith also is the hand that reaches out to receive what God has to give.
 - When God gave Israel a land, they had to go in and possess it. They had to do something to receive the land.
 - So must the believer. United with Jesus through belief in Him, adopted into the Family of God, indwelt with the Holy Spirit, gradually the believer grows and matures and serves the Lord Jesus with the gift/s the Holy Spirit has given.
 - The believer's faith causes the believer to be of service to the Lord Jesus.

III. FEELINGS ARE FLEXIBLE

- 1. Feelings can be unpredictable because they can change so quickly.**
 - They are affected by just about anything - health, weather, job, family, friends, etc.
 - God knows all about our feelings and understands our frequent bouts with our feelings.
- 2. Often Faith produces feelings.**
 - Relief from a heavy burden of sin, the joy of forgiveness, the light of wisdom from God's Word, the peace that comes from reassured faith and the joy that the believer has in his/her faith that Jesus is coming back.
- 3. The absence of certain feelings doesn't mean that something is wrong.**
 - Depression can come quickly, unexpectedly at any time.
 - Sometimes it is hard to tell the difference between love, and deep friendship, between elated joy and happy joy, between peace and having an attitude of serenity.
 - There are times when one may be in a mind of question, not sure of this or that, therefore no certain feeling either way.
 - Then sometimes God causes us to be without this or that in order to teach, to have us re-check our faith in Him and so we have unsure feelings.

CONCLUSION:

1. The believer must learn how to be still before God.

- Fact, Faith and Feelings are tried, tested and used every day and the believer needs to spend time each day with the Lord in stillness and waiting so that he/she can keep things in their proper order with the Lord.

2. The believer must take time to be alone with God.

- The believer must get away from the rush and hurry of the world in order to hear the still small voice therefore one must sit before the Lord in prayer and meditation.

3. The believer must eagerly want to do what God wants.

- There is a big difference between wishing for something and making up one's mind to have it.
- One must be determined and then he/she will be settled in what he/she "wills"/wants.

4. The believer must have a promise from God in hand.

- Study the Bible and know God's Word and then when you have a need or a want, go to God's Word where your need is found and place your finger upon it and then seated before God, alone, in that quiet, still time, claim it before God.

5. The proper order in dealing with the things of God is: FACT - FAITH - FEELING