

Chris Miller

Session 2 | ONGOING NATURE OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

- Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith, it is impossible to please God.”
- Romans 3:23-25 ” For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.”
- John 3:16 ”God so loved the world he sent His only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Our task this morning is simply to answer the questions: 1) What is faith, and 2) how does faith function in the daily routine of Christian living?

II. WHAT IF FAITH?

Faith is a personal, trusting response to God for what he has accomplished or promised in Jesus Christ.

- Faith is NOT Optimism (positive thoughts that bring about what is desired)
- Faith is NOT a Bias (A deep belief with no regard to facts)
- Faith is NOT a Form of Bigotry (a deep belief in spite of facts)

4 Truths Concerning Faith

1. Faith Consists of 3 Essential Elements

- Content (Our Thinking)
- Agreement (Our Choosing)

John Murray:

“Faith is forced consent. That is to say, when evidence is judged by the mind to be sufficient, the state of mind we call “faith” is the inevitable precipitate (cause). It is not something we can resist or in respect of which we suspend judgment. In such a case, faith is compelled; it is demanded, it is commanded.

For whenever the reasons are apprehended or judged sufficient...faith or belief is induced. Will to the contrary, desire to the contrary, overwhelming interest to the contrary, cannot make us believe the opposite of our judgment with respect to evidence.”

- Trust (Our Desiring)

2. Saving Faith is Responsive

Spurgeon recalls: "I had been struggling to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, 'Look!' what a charming word it seemed to me. Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. The cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that very moment I saw the sun. I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him."

Knox Chamblin: "Faith rests entirely on God's achievement....In Paul, faith is always a response to God's saving work in Christ, never a basis of salvation; it is essential but not meritorious. One is saved "through faith," never "on account of faith. Faith is not a giant work, the finest accomplishment that one can offer to God. IT is not self-assertion, but self-abandonment, an utter trust in and reliance upon God."

3. Faith and Repentance Work Together

Acts 20:21 Paul summarizes his gospel ministry with these words: "Testifying both to Jews and Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Isaiah 55:6-7 "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Luke 24:46-47 Following his resurrection, Jesus famously appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. While walking with them, “He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, ‘This it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations.

Herman Bavinck: "Faith and repentance are not two successive moments in time, but two aspects of one and the same act of turning to God. Faith without repentance would be dead presumption; repentance without faith would end in despair." (Reformed Dogmatics, vol.4)

J.C. Ryle: "Repentance and faith are like the two hinges on which the door of salvation turns. They are like two sides of the same coin... To separate them is to destroy the gospel. You cannot have true saving faith without repentance, nor true repentance without faith" (Old Paths, ch.7)

Charles Spurgeon: “Repentance and faith are twins; they are born together, and they will live together until we enter into glory...” (sermon, Faith and Repentance Inseparable, 1862).

Professor John Murray famously spoke of “penitent faith” and of “believing repentance.”

4. Faith Trusts and Entrusts

Robert Jones: “we entrust to the Lord the things we can’t control, and we trust the Lord to do what He promises to do. We cannot and must not trust the Lord to do what we want Him to do. He is not our personal genie or divine bellhop;

biblical faith depends on God's assurances, not our hopes. But we can and must entrust the many details of our lives we can't control into His sovereign, wise, and loving hands. We shouldn't trust the Lord to change our family and friends; we should entrust them into His hands, trusting the Lord to do what His Word guarantees."

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of this not seen."

Hebrews 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

1 John 5:9, 11 "If you receive the testimony (words) of men, the testimony of God is greater... whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son."

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