

Faith Toward God

*Hebrews 6:1-3 - Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, **and of faith toward God**, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. [Emphasis added are mine]*

Faith – What is it?

1. firm conviction, fully persuaded (belief)
2. a personal surrender to Him (an act)
3. a conduct inspired by such surrender (an act)
4. abandonment of self into the care of another (an act)

Defined – faith is a fully persuaded belief that is ensued by action coinciding with that belief. It is not simply a mental assent of knowledge or truth. It is not simply agreeing with something that is true. Biblical faith provokes that person to act upon that belief in some fashion and allow it to dictate their actions. A synonym that I think is better suited to the biblical definition of faith is the word trust. Trust has more of the connotation of surrendering or abandoning one's self into the care of another. Biblical faith is absolutely and undeniably active in nature and expression.

Paul preached the gospel to the Jews and Gentiles. At one time he met with the elders of the church and recounted his experiences and shared this statement:

*Acts 20:20,21 - And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and **faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**. [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul held nothing back that would be spiritually profitable. He taught, publicly and from house to house that he visited, the message of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Identity of the Man Jesus Christ

The author of Hebrews states that one of the origins of the doctrine of Christ is faith toward God. Paul preached faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Is this a Contradiction? Was Paul misquoted? No, not at all. We must remember that these recorded words are the inspired word of God, not the mistakes of men's writings.

Let us look at the testimony and witness of the writers of the Old and New Covenant to see that faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ is faith toward God.

*Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** [Emphasis added are mine]*

Isaiah prophesied of a child who would be born. This child would be considered “*The mighty God, the everlasting Father.*” This scripture is undoubtedly the prophecy concerning Jesus Christ. Jesus is our mighty God and the Father eternal who was manifested in the flesh.

*Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, **and shall call his name Immanuel.** [Emphasis added are mine]*

Isaiah prophesied of this same child in another instance and said they will call Him Immanuel. We find in Matthew 1:23 that Immanuel (Emmanuel) is interpreted as "God with us." The baby was considered “God with us” even from His birth.

Let us look at Paul’s testimonies identifying who Jesus Christ was to him:

*I Timothy 3:16 - And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh,**... [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul writing to Timothy explicitly declared that God manifested or revealed Himself in the flesh. That flesh spoken of was the man Jesus Christ.

*II Corinthians 5:18,19 - And all things are of God, **who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.** [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul said to the Corinthians that, by Jesus Christ, we have been reconciled to God. He clarifies that statement and clearly says how because, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.”

Colossians 2:9 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Paul said that in the body of the man Jesus Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead.

*Colossians 1:15 - **Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ... [Emphasis added are mine]***

Paul said Jesus was the image of the invisible God of Israel in the flesh. No man can see God unless He makes Himself visible and perceivable in some fashion. He made Himself visible and perceivable in the flesh. That’s why Jesus said, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*” (John 14:9).

*Philippians 3:8 - Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of **Christ Jesus my Lord**: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul confessed that Christ Jesus was his Lord. There is only one Lord (Mark 12:29; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:5). Was Paul mistaken again? Did Paul believe that he submitted himself to two Lords? God the Father and Jesus His Son? Not according to Paul.

*I Corinthians 12: 4-5 - Now there are diversities of gifts, but the **same Spirit**. And there are differences of administrations, but the **same Lord**. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the **same God** which worketh all in all. [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul addressed the diversity of gifts and said they are from the same Spirit. He said there are differences of administrations of these gifts, but they are still from the same Lord. There are diversity of operations, but it is the same God that works in them all. Paul understood that there was one God, who was and is the same Lord, who was and is the same Spirit from the Old Covenant.

*I Timothy 4:10 - For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust **in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. [Emphasis added are mine]***

Paul said to Timothy that, “We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men.” Was Paul’s God and Savior two different persons? Paul's God was His Savior. His Savior was God.

*Titus 1:3,4 - But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of **God our Saviour**; To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from **God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour**. [Emphasis added are mine]*

Paul testified to Titus that the Lord Jesus Christ was the “our Savior”! Are we to believe that “God our Savior”, “God the Father”, and “the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior” are 3 different people? Paul was writing of his God, his Savior, and recognizing Him in His roles as God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ the Redeemer.

Titus 2:13 - Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; [Emphasis added are mine]

Paul said in the same letter to Titus a little later that he was looking for the glorious appearing of his great God and Savior - Jesus Christ!

*Titus 3:4,6 - But after that the kindness and love of **God our Saviour** toward man appeared,...*

Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; [Emphasis added are mine]

Paul is **not** acknowledging two different persons. Paul is speaking of Him in terms of His roles. The man Jesus Christ was none other than our God and Savior come in the flesh.

Let us look at Peter's testimonies identifying who Jesus Christ was to him:

*1 Peter 1:1,11 - Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through **the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ**:*

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. [Emphasis added are mine]

Was Peter misguided, deluded and deceived? He emphatically confesses and claims that Jesus Christ is his God, Lord, and Savior. Peter is in complete agreement with Paul on the identity of Jesus Christ.

Let us look at Thomas' testimony identifying who Jesus Christ was to him:

*John 20:27,28 - Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, **My Lord and my God.** [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Thomas probably made the greatest statement of faith before receiving the blessed Holy Spirit. Jesus was to him, “My Lord and my God.” Three witnesses who testify that the true identity of Jesus Christ is God. Not another God (god). Not a 2nd person of God (god), but God Himself – manifested in the flesh.

Let us look at John's testimony identifying who Jesus Christ was to him:

*John 1:1,2 – **In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** He was in the beginning with God. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

More properly translated and paraphrased this verse says that in the beginning was the Word. Not only was the Word with God, but God was the Word.

*John 1:14 - **And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,** (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Since God was the Word and the Word was made flesh, Paul was able to say to Timothy, by revelation, that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh or manifested (revealed) in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16).

Later John wrote a letter we call I John and in this letter he begins in very much the same style as the gospel of John that he wrote:

*I John 1:1,2 - **That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;** (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

In this verse John starts with that which was from the beginning (just as “in the beginning was” – from John 1:1). That which he heard, saw, looked upon and touched was/is the Word of life (also

known as “the Word” – from John 1:1). This life was manifested (also known as “the Word” [of Life] was made flesh – from John 1:14 & I Timothy 3:16), and John states that he saw the Word and witnessed that the Word dwelt among us (John 1:14).

Who was the Word (of Life) that John the apostle kept referring to in his writings? In the beginning, was the Word, the Word was with God, and God was the Word (of Life). The Word, who is God, manifested Himself in the flesh. This manifestation in the flesh was Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.

*I John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even **in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.** [Emphasis added are mine]*

The final witness in agreement with Paul, Peter, and Thomas is John. John testifies with emphatic agreement that Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life.

Let’s read what Jesus said to the Pharisees who would not believe that Jesus was who He said he was.

*John 8:23,24,39-41,44,47 - And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that **ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.***

*They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. **Ye do the deeds of your father.** Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.*

*(Jesus speaking) - **Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.** He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.*

*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because **ye are not of God.** [Emphasis added are mine]*

The identification of Jesus is undeniable. He said to the Pharisees that if they would not believe that He was who He said He was that they would die in their sins. They tried to rely on their earthly heritage for salvation by saying Abraham was their father. Jesus rebuked them for that for

they did not follow the example of Abraham in doing his works (obeying the voice of God) and if they were Abraham's true children (of the seed of faith) they would have accepted what Jesus said and believed. Then the Pharisees said that they had one father who was God. If their father truly was God they would have heeded Jesus' words because he that is of God hears His voice and Jesus was the express voice of God. The Pharisees did not hear or heed the voice of God in Jesus and proved that their true father was the devil and so did the lusts of their father.

Jesus showed a very important principle in familial relationships. Children do the will of their father. Children of God do the will of God and children of the devil (disobedience) do the will of the devil.

The Mediator – the Man Christ Jesus

*I Timothy 2:5 - For there is **one God**, and one mediator between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**; [Emphasis added are mine]*

God has made the man Jesus Christ the mediator. Jesus Christ is the mediator, the one who restores and reconciles man to God. A mere mortal man could not have thought of such a thing, let alone have the power and ability to do such a magnificent and wonderful thing for man. Only God could have done such a thing, and He did it through the man Jesus Christ.

Man cannot approach God or see Him, and indeed no man has seen God (I John 4:12). However, we can approach God through mediation. [David Huston](#), a pastor and author, writes in his article entitled [The Water and the Tree](#),

“Speaking to His apostles as the Mediator between God and men, Jesus declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Throughout the ages, people have attempted to come to God through many pathways, but according to the Bible, a person can only come to God by way of the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus. As Peter explained, “Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit...” (I Peter 3:18).”

The God of the Old Covenant, also known as the Father, is Jesus our God and Savior. Jesus is the door and portal and by faith in Him we can have access to the riches of the kingdom of God and eternal life. This is the God whom the apostles preached. This is the God whom I preach.

By putting our faith in Jesus Christ, we testify that our reliance and trust is in God.

Romans 5:1 - Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

We are justified by that faith in Jesus and now find everlasting peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:26 - For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. [Emphasis added are mine]

By our faith in Jesus Christ we are now the children of God.

Are we to keep our “faith in God”, as the Pharisees so thought, separate and apart from Jesus Christ?

Revelation 14:12 - Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. [Emphasis added are mine]

According to our God, Jesus Christ, we are to keep the faith of Jesus. The "faith of Jesus" is a complete surrender to God. Our willingness to be abandoned into His hands is what sets us apart from all men who do not put their trust in God. "Walking in the Spirit" or "Walking by faith" means that our lives and bodies are presented before Him, for Him to live through us. Just as the man Jesus Christ surrendered himself willingly to the Spirit of God to accomplish the Father's will, so are we expected to trust in God in that very same manner.

Jesus is “the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

In conclusion, faith toward God is believing that Jesus Christ was who He said He was - the Father - God Himself come in the flesh. Following that belief is your conscious and willful act of surrendering yourself and completely abandoning yourself into His care and following after Him.