

Kingdom News

Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever... (Matt. 6:13)

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Faith that Works by Love

... Or Not ...

In our last edition we talked about *faith* as a medium of exchange in the Kingdom of God. We also mentioned that *love* was the economic policy of the Kingdom. As we wrapped up that discussion, we mentioned that there is a “faith that works by love” and there is a “faith that does require love to work;” but it is still faith and is, to some degree, effective.

We offered to discuss the differences between these two types of faith, in this edition.

Faith that does not “work by love” is of very limited effectiveness. This faith can operate the law of “giving.” People, who are by nature “giving,” generally feel confident (faith) that their needs will also be met. The law of giving is effective for anyone who chooses to avail themselves of its benefits. The promise that is foundational to this law is “give and it shall be given to you.” (Luke 6:38 .KJV paraphrased) All that is required is simple faith, unfettered by an abundance of prerequisites. Anybody can “give.”

Another series of works, that do not require love to operate, extrapolates into one of the golden rules of

Faith that Works...

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The Leadership Corner Leadership Living, Inc.

It's Your Time Now

The weather has started to warm up a bit. Now it's time to spring into action. For months you have been reading about various leadership challenges and tips in this column. And I was preparing to write the article for this month when God stopped me and said, “Get the readers involved.” As I meditated on what the Lord said, I caught the vision.

It's time for the readers to share their stories of leadership victories and challenges. So, if you are interested, here is what you will want to do. Send me an email about a victory or challenge you have recently experienced that was related to exhibiting leadership. It could have taken place on your job, at school, at home, at church, etc. You can also send questions you may have about how to be a more effective leader in whatever capacity you serve.

The purpose for this invitation is to be able to share with others some of the leadership-related issues, successes, and questions that come up in everyday life. You will want to hurry, if you'd like your inquiry, question or comment addressed in the next newsletter. Your email must be received no later than May, 21, 2008. This will allow time to review the responses and prepare for the June edition. Just think about it. You have an opportunity to interact with our family of readers by sharing your story or question. Ok, start writing. The email address is right below my name. I will be looking for your email.

In the meantime, know that we are moving into a new season. As the warmer months approach, God will interact with us in creative ways. Many of us will take small steps of faith to move toward the visions and dreams that God has placed in our hearts. It's a truly exciting time!



Leadership Living, Inc.
Joyce M. White, MSW – CEO

For additional information you may contact us at leadershiplivinginc@yahoo.com

JASPER



For God so loved the world that
He gave is only begotten Son.

That whosoever, believes in
Him shall not perish.

They shall instead have eternal
life.

(John 3:16 KJV by translation)



relationship etiquette "...do unto others as you would have them do to you..." (Matt. 7:12 KJV by interpretation) Generally, people who treat others with basic human respect, expect, or have faith, that they will receive the same in return. Interestingly enough, this expectation comes from two places: 1) the law of God is written in our heart [whether or not a person reads or believes the Bible, they expect that if they are respectful to others they can reasonably expect to be treated in kind]; 2) the scriptures teach this principle.

Now, the faith that works by love (or requires love to operate), is fundamental to such promises as "ask, and it shall be given; seek and you shall find; knock and the door shall be opened to you." (Matt 7:7-11, 21 KJV paraphrased) We can see this to be the case, as Jesus goes on to explain the principle He references the relationship between a father and his child. The faith that operates with these benefits implies relationship (between the requester and the Father). "Relationship" in the Kingdom concept of the term, always implies love ... always. And the type of love required is defined here as our obligation to "...love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength; and our neighbor as our self." (Deut 6:5; Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27 KJV by reference)

We know this to be true by our own experiences, in that everyone who "asks" does not receive. No one says it better than our brother James (4:3 KJV by reference); "you ask and do not receive, because you do not fulfill the prerequisite "love" in your asking. Your purpose for asking is selfish." Selfishness and love cannot co-exist; and selfishness does not motivate God. Further more, God's righteousness and wisdom forbids positive reinforcement where selfishness abides; therefore He cannot "give" in these instances.

Another promise that requires "faith that works by love" is found in Paul's letter to the Romans (8:28 KJV by reference) "...all things work together for good, to those who love God..." Again we see the implication of a preexistent relationship. And *love* is the only relationship in the Kingdom.

So whether we avail ourselves of the benefits of the "faith that works by love" or the "faith that does not work by love;" in all cases faith requires "work." If I believe in the "law of giving;" I must "give." If I want people to extend to me basic human respect, I must, first, treat others in that manner. While all *works* do not imply the existence of *faith*; all faith most certainly

expresses itself by *works*. Where there are no works, there is no faith; as “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26 KJV)

Where there is supreme love for God, and equitable love for your fellow man; all that God has provided for us in Christ Jesus, is yours (...health ...forgiveness ...strength ...eternal security ...love ...etc.).

And this is the faith that works by love. 

JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Positions of Faith

By David L. White

What is a position of faith?

I'm guessing that some would envision 'positions of faith' as situations in which people *find* themselves. Perhaps, others would assume that it is a time when you *find* yourself needing to exercise faith.

Actually, a “position of faith” is a position that every person must enter into intentionally; not a position that they *find* themselves in *unintentionally*. If we believe God for anything, or if we have a need that we want God to fill, we must actively put ourselves in a “position of faith.” It is not a physical or geographical position that we take. It is a place of knowing, and doing, the requisite activities of faith. You'll recall that “faith without works is dead.”

Habakkuk 2:4 says “...the just shall live by faith.” The saying seems simple enough; that the just are sustained by faith. I submit that the just not only are sustained by faith; but the just are known by their faith, and the fruit thereof. We will see what is meant by this shortly.

Matthew 17:20 paraphrased says “...if you have *faith* as a grain of mustard seed, *you will say* to this mountain, remove from this place to another place; and it will move...” From this we may understand faith to have the characteristics of a seed.

Most people probably are not able to differentiate between types of seeds; I know that I certainly cannot. But if you plant that seed; then some of us will be able to tell what type of seed it was by the

plant that grows. Even more people can tell the type of seed by the fruit produced by the plant.

Consider this; here we have three basic elements: the seed, the plant, and the fruit. We know now that faith is the seed. The object of our faith (or the thing hoped for) is the fruit. While I cannot name all of the fruits that exist, it is probably safe to suppose that most of the fruits that grow require a corresponding plant, or root system.

What, then, is the plant? You see, this is the critical component. It is the plant that requires time and effort. Having “faith,” in the intellectual sense of the term, is easy enough since the *idea of faith* doesn't take any real effort. We often have faith in things that we're not even conscious of.

In order to produce a plant or tree, the seed must be buried. Essentially, the outside of the seed has to die (be broken) in order for the life within the seed to produce a plant. Likewise the intellectual *idea of faith* has to die (be broken); so that the *life of faith* can produce.

As an example: I could say I believe in your business idea; but until I make an investment (time, money, other resources) who knows what I really believe. Even more so, how can I be sure of my own faith, if I'm not willing to make an investment? Believing is free; however, having faith costs. You get the point.

Such is the case with faith in God and His promises. **Every** time God interacts with you regarding things that require *faith*; be certain that corresponding *action* is a subsequent requirement. The Lord told Noah that He was going to flood the earth (Gen. 6:13, 17 KJV). This was not just a typical weather report on the Monday morning news. No one had ever seen a “flood” or “rain” before, not even Noah. As yet, “the Lord had not caused it to rain on the earth; ... instead there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.” (Gen 2:5-6 KJV by reference) Digest this; exactly what type of *faith* does it take to believe something like that? If the Lord said something like that today, it would not require as great a deal of faith, as in Noah's day. We've seen floods; we have a proliferation of historical references. But Noah didn't have a clue of what was meant by this weather report. Sunshine ... scattered clouds ... he was perhaps a bit more familiar with; but rain and flooding ... not a clue. No frame of reference. Again, I ask what type of faith

... or what *position of faith* did it take to believe this.

That's just the tip of the iceberg; let's peak below the surface. What type of faith does it take to generate *action* that builds an ark, in the face of the ridicule Noah must have had to withstand? Can you imagine *faith*, without the corresponding *actions*, in this case? Can you fathom the results of Noah having "believed" God when He spoke of the impending flood; but not have the kind of *faith* that produces *action* (i.e., the kind of faith that builds an ark). Now we understand what the scriptures mean when it says that "faith without works is dead." (James 2:20 KJV) Noah and his family would have been dead along with everyone else in the earth. And us ... where might we have been absent Noah's obedience? That's another story that I don't think I'm qualified to approach at this point. But this is just one example of the necessity of getting into a *position of faith*. Abraham was directed to go to a far away land, to leave his family (Gen. 12:1 KJV). A directive like that, today, may not be such an amazing feat. We have airplanes, hotels, maps, restaurants, stores, theaters, etc.

But in that day, the family was the center of one's existence. Families survived together. So God asked Abraham to pack up and leave his place of safety and strength. What might a request of this kind call for? A *position of faith*, unlike any Abraham has previously been called to employ. But consider how ineffective and disastrous this type of *faith* would have been without its corresponding *actions* (i.e., packing and setting out for a, then, unknown destination).

The faith that is in our heart is for the eyes of the Lord only. The faith that is in our *hands and feet* is for the eyes of man.

From this we can begin to see why faith's corresponding action is so vital. Faith, in the heart, influences God only; faith "in the hands and feet" influences man. It is God's intention that all men know Him, and the integrity of His character (Ex. 7:5, 17; 8:10, 22, etc. KJV). One of the methods He uses to broadcast this is through horizontal interactions between man and man. Some people are inclined to be influenced by God, directly. But all people are inclined to be influenced by other people. Hence, we have the billions of dollars invested in advertisement. And we have such sciences and disciplines as Psychology and Sociology, etc. When I believe God, and my actions prove my faith, then you are inclined to believe God. When you believe God and your actions prove your

faith, then I am inclined to believe God.

And so it is with positions of faith ... and so it is that faith without works is dead. Faith without works is dead, both, to God and man. God can do nothing with a faith that does not motivate believers to corresponding action; neither can man.

In closing, I'll leave you with one caveat (of which there are many). The actions, that faith produces, directly correspond to the nature of the faith. Understand it this way. You will not likely ever see oranges growing from a banana tree. It is equally unlikely that you will see walnuts on a grape vine. The principle holds that you will not rightly find faith that believes one thing with corresponding actions that prove another. If I am leaving the house to go to the office or to the store, it is not likely that you will find me, immediately thereafter, sitting on the couch reading a book or watching television. If my actions do not arrive at the destination of my faith; if they do not produce the intentions of the thing that I have faith for; then faith, in such a way, is not present.

Get into a position of faith ... be found doing what you believe.

◇ KJV ◇

JEWELS

The *letter* of the law is the Ten Commandments

The *spirit* of the law is that we are to love the Lord with all of our hearts; and our neighbor as ourselves.



A Journey to Intimacy

Getting to Know Me

The Journey – Keeping Me Under Subjection

This past month, has been a time of coming face-to-face with myself.

I have been reading the works of one of my mentors, Charles G. Finney (1792 - 1875). One particular 13-part series, of his, is entitled Holiness of Christians in this Present Life. It talks about what is reasonable to expect to accomplish, or to be accomplished in us, as Christians while we live in this world. I'm sure that each of us will have had somewhat different experiences and understandings as a result of our own professions of faith (or systems of belief), on this topic.

For the sake of this discussion I'll reference only two points on the continuum of beliefs. There is one 'school of thought' that holds that we can believe in Jesus Christ for salvation; but that does not affect the type of life we live in this world (after all we're just human). Another 'school of thought' holds that not only must we believe in Jesus Christ for salvation; but we can and must live a life that is circumscribed by the truths of his life and teachings. I am of the latter camp.

That being said, as I continue my journey to a deeper understanding, respect and relationship with God I've come upon some truths that are revolutionary for me.

One of the things that had I wrestled with (and some of you may be able to identify with this) is that of bringing my "self" under subjection to the ordinances of the kingdom of God. I knew the fundamental truths and teachings, I had heard them all of my life (Deut. 6:5-22). For the sake of transparency, the use of the term "knew" in this context implies "mental assent." I had experienced "intellectual exposure" to them. But "knowing" them did absolutely nothing, as far as my ability to bring my "self" in line with them. I now saw first-hand what Paul meant, in his letter to the Romans (7:18, 23 KJV). In a more refined fashion, what was being said is this: I am aware that as long as I am governed by my appetites, desires and passions (flesh), I cannot accomplish the good that is required by the law of God (Deut. 6:5-21 and Matt. 22:37-40). I must admit, however, that the ability to will (as an executive

decision) it is fully available to me (I want to do what I know is right). But the "how to" alludes me.

For example, I knew that I was obligated to "love the Lord with all of my heart, etc." With the amount of light and revelation I had experienced to that point, I would have described my compliance in these terms. Regarding the "love the Lord" part, I believed that I loved Him. Regarding the "with all of my heart, soul ... etc." part, the jury was still out on that verdict; partially, because I didn't really know how to measure it. While I wanted to love Him, with my whole heart; I pretty much knew that I kept back "part of my heart" to fulfill my own desires. While some teach that this is all we can expect to do in this life, my heart wouldn't allow me to believe that. In fact, I know this to be as completely untrue and presumptuous as to border on fraudulent.

The price that Jesus paid, on our behalf, and the provisions that He has made, gives us 100% of everything we need to live a complete and godly life, right here in this world. Without excuse, we have everything we need to overcome our temptations to gratify the impulses of the flesh. This provision is supported by the promise "... his divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him..." (2 Peter 1:3 KJV by reference) The problem is that we don't *want* to be governed by the laws of God (and this I speak from personal experience). Because we somehow think, within ourselves, that we cannot submit to His governance and still live the type of life that we believe will be personally fulfilling. We want righteousness and salvation (peace, joy and eternal security) on our own terms. News Flash: "Won't happen." If we want righteousness and salvation on our own terms, we're going to have to write our own contract. We cannot change the terms of a contract that has already been written and signed (in blood). And we cannot live in non-compliance to a pre-existent contract and expect to avail ourselves of the benefits it offers.

That's akin to a gentleman walking into the Benefits Department of a Fortune 20 company, asking for an application for healthcare benefits. After answering some questions, and waiting for a while; he is told that while the benefits are available, he could not make use of them. He asks, "Why not? If they're available, I should be able to have them." The reply comes back, "Sir, you have to be an employee of the company, to make use of the benefits."

Returning to my journey: I now know that the reason it had been so difficult to bring my “self/flesh” under subjection, was because I was still being governed by the *law of selfishness*. The law of selfishness (as the name implies) is such that everything we desire and do, is for the sole purpose of satisfying some appetite, desire or passion of ours. It is 180 degrees, diametrically, opposed to the law of righteousness, as taught by God. We cannot both submit to God with our whole heart and submit to the dictates of the self/flesh. The law of God and the law of the flesh are odds with each other, by a law of necessity. (Rom. 8:7 KJV by reference) We must choose one to the exclusion of the other.

Closing Advice: In the words of Moses “... I have set before you life and death ... choose life ...” (Deut. 30: 15-16, 19-20 KJV paraphrased)

I’ve made my choice.

What about you?



JoAnn C. White, SMHG

PEARLS



Faith is the Law of Gravity in the Kingdom.



SUMMARY



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The Leadership Corner –Leadership Living, Inc

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A Journey to Intimacy - Getting to Know Me

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Editor: JoAnn C. White, SMHG

KingdomNewsletter@yahoo.com