

Faith

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[0 : 00] It is a great honor to be here this night with you. Well, Reverend Pastor Derek told me it should be just say a little bit about me.

Well, my name is Israel. And I just finished my studies at ETS. I was doing my master there. And it's really good to be here this night or evening because the last months.

We have been working with the Spanish speaking community back at Cornstone Free Church. So it has been really good for us to share the gospel in this beautiful language, Spanish.

So it's beautiful actually, but difficult. But I'm not going to preach in Spanish. So I'm going to preach in English. And I'm going to preach about faith.

So this is a good theme for me now because I don't have a good English. So I'm going to preach by faith now. So let's read again Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8 and 10 to 10.

[1 : 11] This is God's word. So let's read it with fear and joy at the same time. For by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not the results of works so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So we live in a society where unbelief is increasing every day. Nobody wants to believe in something. People don't fear God.

If we talk about God outside there on the royal mile on Princess Street, nobody cares about that. So people don't believe in God. People don't believe.

People don't believe. But are we sure about that? When people claims that they don't believe in anything. But at the same time they claim to believe in spiritual stuff.

[2 : 21] I don't know maybe in this cards or in the future or even on this Chinese cookie, you know. But people believe in something. Or other people could say, no, but sounds a little bit stupid.

How can you believe in this Chinese cookies or I don't know. But at the same time they are believing in something. They believe in their careers. They believe in their bank accounts.

They believe in their position on society. They believe in some political party to be the solution for this society. So I really want to say that everyone's believing in something.

We are believing in something. So we have faith. But the question is, what is the object of our faith? So today I'm going to talk about faith.

And maybe you can think, oh, a sermon again about faith. Even when Derek told me, you should preach about faith. And was like, faith, but we are talking about faith every day.

[3 : 27] We are Christians. We are evangelicals. We are reform. We are free church members. So faith is so common to us. But are we really living through faith?

Do we really understand what faith is? So this is very important because we are not dealing here with something simple.

Or I don't know. We are dealing with our souls. We are dealing with our salvation. We are dealing with eternal things. So we are not playing here.

That's the reason that I want to preach about faith. Because people, they're outside. When they are shopping through this Black Friday, they are seeking something.

They are seeking to trust in something, in their clothes, in their money or whatever. People are outside and people here, we are looking to trust in someone.

[4 : 34] But the problem is that we choose the wrong object of our faith. So we all need a savior, but we choose the wrong savior. This is the reason why these verses and the whole message of the Bible are very important for society.

But not just for society, but even for us, the church. These verses talk about a thing that is vital for our soul.

And without it, it is impossible to please God. I am referring to faith. The precious instrument of God for our salvation, faith.

Because we are often so accustomed to some words, we lose the profound meaning of this. Faith, again? Perhaps one of you may be thinking, but this morning the excellent preacher, he just preached about faith, the gospel and everything.

So why we need to hear again a sermon about faith? Because we live by faith, not by sight. So I want to share with you, I hope, briefly, three points.

[5 : 51] Because that is the rule that we learn in Samarit. No, just joking. So I want to talk about the nature of faith, the object of our faith.

And third, the fruit of faith, good works. So the first point is the nature of faith, it's not about works. The object of our faith, Christ's work and person, and finally the fruit of faith, for created for good works.

So the first point, the nature of faith. Faith is related, sorry, with certainty. But certainty about what? Surgency about the deepest and the simple things in our life.

Faith is related with the purpose of our life. Faith is related even of the way of how we are walking every day, how we are preparing some food, how we are talking to our wives or husbands or children.

Faith is related even of why we are here tonight. But faith is related mainly with our salvation. Again, and especially in our Christian circles, we tend to forget what the salvation really means.

[7 : 15] And because we forget what salvation is about, we forget what faith is. So we need to remember what salvation is. We need to remember what the gospel is.

And on verse 8, and Ephesians chapter 2 said, For by grace you have been saved through faith. So here we can see the three words, sorry, grace, salvation, faith.

So dear friends, brothers and sisters here, we born spiritually dead. And according to the first verse of chapter 2, we were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

Children of wrath. So we are not children of mother nature, of children of something.

We were born as children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. Three things we can notice here. The first one is that we were dead in sins.

[8 : 27] The second is that the way of our daily walking was sin. And thirdly, the result of this is the wrath of God upon every one of us.

So what is the meaning of being dead in our sins? It is a consciously breaking law walking. That is consciously not loving God, not loving my neighbor.

That is hating God and hating the person that is next to me. When God is the most perfect, holy and beautiful being, full of joy and happiness, and who has created us to delight in Him, to find this pleasure in Him, but we decide to seek that pleasure in the most awful things.

That is sin. When God gave us gifts, as we are looking for this series about the gifts of the Spirit, so when God gave us gifts, talents, air to our lungs, food to our bodies, to be a blessing for our neighbor, but we use all these means, we use all these precious gifts to hurt our neighbor.

That is sin. To be dead in sins is to see how the world is destroying and do nothing. It is to see my brother dying and do nothing.

[10 : 18] Sorry, no. It is to see my brother dying and run to destroy him again and again, raising false testimony against him.

That is sin. So it's to see my brother dying and do nothing. It is to try to be a good Christian, clothed with legalism.

That is sin. It is to try to not preach the whole counsel of God. That is sin. It is to live just by our good works and not live by faith.

That is sin. So what do we deserve for sin against an infinite and holy God? This is very important because if we want to grab and taste this precious message of the gospel, we need to know this.

What do we deserve for sin against an infinite and holy God? The only thing that we deserve because we sin against an infinite God, we deserve the infinite and holy wrath of God in hell forever.

[11 : 45] I know that this is very strong, but if we want to get the good news of the gospel, this love of God, that we learn all this we can here, we need to know this bad news.

Five years ago, I used to work on cancer research back in Chile. So we were trying to develop some vaccines for skin cancer. It's really sad to talk about this.

But when you see young people of 20 years old with this kind of cancer, with just four months to live, and they come into this lab seeking for a solution, they really love this vaccination, they really love the cure.

Why we don't love the cure of the gospel? Because maybe we don't know what this all just is. Maybe because we don't know the meaning of sin against God. It is not just a dirty little secret, it's we are sinning against a holy God.

[13:04] So if we really want to appreciate the love of God, the amazing grace of God that we really like to sing, we need to know this, we need to understand this.

And please pay attention to this. The only thing that we deserve, the only thing that we deserve is the infinite and holy graph of God.

Therefore, every person that is in this room now or is walking there outside needs a savior. We need a savior. We need a savior who can save us from this graph, but at the same time, a savior that restore our relationship with God and with our neighbor, that restores our relationship with our brothers and sisters in order to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever, and also to enjoy our communion with our brothers and sisters in order to love my friend.

And not just to love my friend, but even to love my enemies. That's the gospel. Sorry, that's the fruit of the gospel. So the first thing that is mentioned here is, Versailles, that by grace you have been saved.

We are saved by grace. Do you remember that the only thing that we deserve is this graph of God, this hell? Well, please listen to this.

[14:36] Grace is the undeserved gift of God for our salvation. Do you deserve grace? No.

So grace is for you. Grace is for us. The grace of God is for every kind of person, rich, poor, conservative, liberal, from left to right party, because all we have is the same spiritual disease and all we need is the same cure.

Do you think that you deserve grace after the sin that you committed last night secretly in your room?

If your answer is no, well, grace is for you. Grace, this amazing grace is for us, because we don't deserve it.

Therefore, grace is for us. Do you think that do you deserve grace after living thousands of years of a double Christian life, one life here and another life in your house?

[15:57] Do you deserve grace? Do you deserve salvation? If your answer is no, well, grace is for you. Grace is for me. But not for tomorrow only, but for now, for this minute, for this second.

So my friend, grace is for you. And God gave us a precious instrument to grab this, to hold this, and that is faith.

But we are not saved by faith itself. We are saved through faith, because the only one that who can save us, it's not the size of your faith.

It's the object of our faith, Jesus Christ. So what is faith? I want to go very quickly to this precious answer that we can find in the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

I really like it. I know that you like it also. Question 86, what is faith in Jesus Christ?

[17:08] Good. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel.

So faith is a saving grace, that is, an undeserved gift of God, where we receive and rest in Christ.

But here, we need to understand three important elements in faith, three elements that are involved in faith, our intellect, that's the first one, our affections, our emotions, and thirdly, our will.

Therefore, we need to know the good news of the Gospel, describing our Bible. Remember, faith comes by hearing God's word. Therefore, my dear friends here, my dear Scottish friends, how can we have faith if we are not reading or studying or hearing about the Bible?

So we need to read it, study it, and meditate upon the Bible. But this doesn't stop here, or affections are involved. So our intellect understands the good news of the grace of God, but we need to understand the truth of the scriptures of the Bible.

But this is not just to say, for example, wow, grace is for me because I am a sinner. We can understand that in our minds, but our emotions must be involved in this.

[18 : 55] It is not just to say, oh, Christ died for me. Is Christ died for me? And please, I am not talking about to have emotion as some Latinas we can have, you know, these burning emotions.

No, I am not talking about that. I am not talking to have a sea of tears here about the Gospel. No, no, no, I am talking to have hearts in flame of this joy because God loves me.

I am talking about that your heart is in fire. God loves me. Even when he knows that I did last night or during all my life.

His love is forever. How can this precious doctrine could be a dry or cold doctrine quite similar to the weather that we have now?

But this is not all. You can even know this in your mind. Your heart could be in flame with all this, but that is not saving faith.

[20 : 19] We can know everything about this scandalous grace, about the love of God that we have been learning during all these years. But you can be lost.

Why? Because our will must be involved in this. That is why the third element is very important, our will.

It is not enough to have this information, this good theological definition. It is not enough to have thousands of books in our libraries.

We are not walking libraries, my dear friends. It is not enough to have our tears singing about God's grace.

Well, now we need to do one of the most difficult things that we can do. Actually, in our state of spiritual death, we hate to do this.

[21 : 19] It is really difficult to do this third element. It is impossible to do for someone who has not yet born again.

It is impossible for someone who has not previously regenerated by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. This impossible thing that I am referring, it is to receive and rest.

We have born in a state where we always want to earn everything with the merit of our hands. And to work and work and work to be saved, but faith is different.

Faith is the gift of God, not a result of work. And this is so difficult to believe, even for Christians, even for us, to really know that we are not saved by the size or the length of our prayers, of our theological knowledge.

We are not saved by the Westminster Confession of Faith, my friends. We are saved by a great Savior.

[22 : 37] We are saved by grace through faith. That is resting, resting in Christ. And to rest is to do nothing.

Wait a minute, this is to do nothing? Yes, when you are resting in your home, in your sofa or whatever, when you are in your holidays, what are you doing?

Resting, resting. Because it is all about the gracious work of God in Christ for us. I repeat, to rest is to do nothing.

But hold on, no. I'm sorry, no. It's not like to do nothing, nothing, nothing, no. Faith, it is not passive. We need to do something. And that is keep resting and keep receiving this precious Savior.

[23 : 44] Faith is not something passive, but very active. We are active in receiving. We are active in resting, in resting and enjoying and finding our delight and our satisfaction.

Not in our good or bad works, but it's resting on the precious and almighty work of Christ.

That is faith. You rest on Christ's work. You rest on Christ's bosom. You rest on the arms of the Almighty God, who with his fingers, he created all the universe.

But with his all arm, he loves you, with all his heart, he loves you. That is faith.

So you know this. Your heart is in flame on this, but now you run to rest in Christ.

[25 : 00] But when you are resting on your holidays and you're visiting some place, I don't know, Louis or the Highlands or the south of Chile, a beautiful place, you should go there.

Or Peru, for example, or friend here. When you're resting, what are you doing? Just sleeping?

Okay, yeah, you can sleep, but then you are beholding and contemplating something, the landscape.

So in faith, we behold our Savior. We behold and contemplate the beauty of our Savior.

So quickly, I want to go to the point number two, the object of our faith. Jesus Christ, don't forget this. Faith means no work, no works.

But why is this? It is because the gospel tells us about the work and person of Christ. The gospel is not about your good works, but it's about the good, excellent and amazing work of Christ.

[26 : 07] We don't have faith in faith, but faith in Christ. That's the reason why faith is resting in Christ. Faith contemplates, receives and rests in the person and work of Christ.

So the next question is, do you know Christ? Do you know the man who died on the cross? He's not just a body who dies, a good man, a hippie man, you know? So sometimes it's very easy to talk about, oh, Christ died on the cross, but who is Christ?

Who is Christ for you? Who dies? Who died on the cross? So we need to know about the object of our faith, Jesus Christ.

Let me tell you something. I know that we are doing a series about the spiritual gifts and everything, but don't forget this. Christ is the most beautiful and glorious gift of God.

[27 : 19] God gave his beloved son, for God so loves the world, for God so loves the sinner, for God so loves us.

That he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him, that whoever believes that God gave his son to live for you, that is to represent you in every step and walk, to represent you and me and to fulfill the law of God, loving God with all his heart, mind and strength, but also loving his neighbor. He lived the perfect life for us and paid the price in the cross of Calvary. So the main point of every of this sermon and on every Christian sermon must be Christ.

It is not about the size of your faith now. It is not about the years that you have been a Christian. It is about Christ, my friends, my brothers. It is about Christ, behold the Lamb of God upon the cross, enduring all the wrath of God that we deserve.

Behold the Son of God, bearing all our sins and suffering the flames of hell that you and I really deserve. Behold the blessed for all the ages.

[28 : 52] Please think about this. Let's do this exercise now. Think about the Holy God, the Holy, Holy, Holy God being a curse for us, being crushed by his Father.

Behold the Holy God, the God, being sinned, enduring all the wrath of God.

Behold the most beautiful being who is infinite, more beautiful than all the landscapes of Scotland and Chile together. More beautiful than all the galaxies of the universe.

Behold Christ on the cross with no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should decide him according to Isaiah 53.

Because he bears our sins upon his shoulders. Christ is the object of our faith. Christ is the free gift for you and me.

[30 : 07] This is why faith is focused on the person of work of Christ. Faith is not focused on our work.

So where is your faith? Are you trusting in the Lord or in you? Are you trusting in God or are you trusting in man?

This is serious. We have a soul. You have a soul. Who is going to save you in your deathbed?

Or who is going to save you in this very moment? The money that are you going to have tomorrow in your bank account? Or the grace?

Your successful ministry or career? Or is Christ? So consider the words very briefly of Isaiah 30 verse 1, 2, and 15.

[31 : 09] I don't know if... Well, we can go to our Bibles like the other is. Ah, stubborn children declare the Lord who carry out a plan but not mine and who make an alliance but not of my spirit.

That they may add sin to sin. And now verse 15, please. For does say the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in returning and rest and rest and rest, you shall be saved.

Are you tired? Are you tired of being tired of sinning again and again against that... of battling against that sin?

The Spirit said tonight, come. Come to Christ. Don't look upon your sin now. Please don't look at it. Come even with your sin.

Come even with your struggles. And behold Christ, young man, that you are in college. Behold Christ. Oh man, behold Christ.

[32 : 31] Are you trusting on Egypt or are we trusting in the Lord? Are we receiving and resting the person of Christ? Or this good and amazing message? It is something just to have for theological conversations.

Just to be a good Christians because we like to talk about faith but do we have faith in Christ? Are we resting in Christ? Have you tasted the good word of God?

Or it is something that are you feeding every day? Don't forget the promise of the Lord. In quietness and rest, you shall be saved.

Be still and know that I am God. Be still but we love to always be very active to do something, to find peace.

But be still. Be quiet and behold Christ. Return to your first love.

[33 : 36] Do you remember that day when you knew Christ? Return to that love. And finally, and I don't know, a couple of minutes, I hope so.

Like Corey said every time. Third point, a living faith. So just with having this idea of faith and the object of our faith Christ, we can turn to the third point, a living faith, a faith that produces good works.

And let's read again, in Ephesians 2, not a result of works, so that no one may boast, created in Christ Jesus four good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

So we are not saved by works, but we are saved for good works. In a clear way, because we are already saved.

We do. We must do good works. We don't do good works in order to be saved, but we do good works because we have been saved by the work of Christ.

[34 : 59] And why this is very important? Because through faith we are united to Jesus. We are united to Christ, the tree of life. Therefore, a good tree produces good fruits.

A living faith produces good works, but a dead and false faith produces nothing. So why this is very important?

Because we can even talk about faith, about Christ. But this must be something real in our lives.

The gospel produces good fruits in our lives. The result of the gospel, remember, the gospel is not about what we can do. It's about Christ's work, but the result of the gospel, in all hearts, by the work of the Holy Spirit are good works.

And why this is important? Because we are talking about the gifts of the Holy Spirit on this series, and when Derek told me about preaching about faith, there is a verse there that talks about faith as a charismatic gift of the Holy Spirit.

[36 : 21] But this gift is related to, for us, with a measure of faith that the Lord gave us to some people in different circumstances. When we are in danger, or troubles, or difficult situations, the Lord gave us this measure of faith to trust in God's promises, or to preach the gospel in a specific context.

So quickly, how can we describe these good works that are a result of faith? The first one, faith makes us humble.

Not a result of works, so that no one may boast. God finds pleasure in the humble man, in the humble woman.

But he rejects the pride, the proud man. Faith in Christ leads us to recognize that even our good works are by God's grace, and that makes us humble.

But the proud, he loves to build a tower of his good works in order to seek praise.

[37 : 39] So faith makes us humble, too, because faith is a gift. We become a gift. Our gifts are not given to ourselves, to myself, but to serve others.

But what does it mean to become a gift? And I know that at seminary with Derek and Thomas, we know that we cannot talk about Greek words or Hebrew words, so I'm not going to talk about Greek or Hebrew words, but I'm going to talk about Spanish words or Latin words.

So when I read here in Ephesians 2 about faith is a gift, the root for that word, it's a Latin word, donum.

And that's the root for donation, to donate. So here, because we are united to the gift, capital T and capital G, we become a gift, a donation for others.

So that's a way of how can we exercise faith as a gift of the Holy Spirit. And thirdly, so we walk by faith.

[38 : 58] We don't walk according to what we see or according to our emotions or experience, but we walk according to the Word of God, the Bible, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, our eyes are not fixed even in our good works. Our eyes are not fixed on the numbers of this congregation.

Our eyes are not fixed in our good works. Our eyes are fixed in Christ. Remember Hebrews 11, talk about people who live by faith.

Abraham, Sarah, and you know all these large lists of people that they live by faith, but there's a verse that said they die in faith. Why they die in faith?

Because they live by faith. So if you die now, we can ask, who are we living?

[40 : 01] Are we living by faith or by our deeds? Can we say for me to live is Christ?

Can you say that with Paul? For me to live is Christ.

But if we see our lives, but by faith, through faith, we can say for me to live is Christ.

How are we expressing our faith in Christ? How is our response when we see the cross of Christ?

So it is not enough with just having a cup of tea, of coffee, after every service.

We are not playing to be the church. We are not just living to have good times, good conversation, but in our homes we are other kind of people.

[41 : 08] We don't live by numbers. We don't live by success. We live by faith. We are always looking to Christ, to Christ our Savior. So yes, we need money for the kitchen.

We need money to plan more churches. But you know what we need now? We need to be a man of woman of faith. We need to be a man of woman of God.

College students, we must be, well, you must be, I am not a student, we need to be a man of God, full of the Holy Spirit, living by faith, not by your sins or by your failures or by your success.

No, behold Christ. So let's fix our eyes in Christ our Savior. The gift to be a gift today for others.

Let's pray. Father, we need your Holy Spirit.

[42 : 13] Lead us now in this moment to fix our eyes on Jesus. Remind us our first love.

Give us this passion for Christ in order to be a gift for others. Because we know that you have sent your Son to live and die for us.

Because you love us with an eternal and infinite love. So guide us to put this into practice right now.

Guide us to live by faith in Christ. In your name we pray. Amen.