

THE FRUITS OF FAITH

Rev. Juan B. Cabanting

Scripture Lessons:

[Galatians 5:16-26](#)

[Hebrews 11:1-4](#)

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.
(Ephesians 2:8 KJV)*

In the introduction of the sermon of our bishop last Sunday, it has been pointed out emphatically that in our world today there are a lot of angry people who are marching along the streets demanding for something else. Of course, he said, some of their demands are justified but some of them are not.

Yes, it is an admitted fact that there are a lot of "angry" people today. And I believe of the reasons why they have become "angry" is that they do not believe anymore in the Biblical God. They have become so materialistic to the extent that what they consider as god is what is the creation rather than the Creator. I was amazed one time when a college instructor said, "I have a god but my god is a material god."

Brethren, in these days of unbelief, that many people do not believe in the Biblical God anymore, I think it is time that we shall recall the meaning of faith and also the fruits of faith.

I. What is faith?

Those of us who are frequently reading the Bible have noticed, that one of the most important words in the Bible is the word "faith". The word "faith" has been used many times in both the Old and New Testament. And so, it is, I believe, of paramount importance to recall once again the meaning of faith. What is faith?

1. Some people think that faith is believing the truth about God. For instance, they take all the teachings of Jesus, the ten commandments and other teachings about the truth of God. And upon believing and admitting all these truths about God, they claim that they already have faith. But brethren, believing a body of truths about God is not faith. It is most possible that a person could memorize the whole books and verses of the Bible, but this is not a guarantee that such a person has faith.

2. In the book of Hebrews, we read: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old reassured divine approval." (Hebrews 11:1-2) This is as far as the book of Hebrews is concerned.

3. But let me say this, that faith is something like a key that unlocks the human heart, so that such human heart should submit entirely to the power of Almighty God. In short, faith "refers to the dynamic and vital context of man's meaningful dependence upon the activity of God in Christ." In other words, it should be understood that faith is God's way of making man be dependent upon the activity of God in Christ, which means that man's life and activity should

be measured by what God has done in Jesus Christ. Man should not say "I have faith" yet he does the opposite thing.

4. And finally, faith is a gift. this is Paul's presentation of faith. He says in Ephesians 2:8,9: "For by His grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is this gift of God- not because of works, lest any man should boast." Yes, faith is a gift. It is produced in man as a result of the power of the Holy spirit which is constantly working in him through different means like, hearing sermons, reading the Bible, singing hymns, praying, and participating in the Holy Communion, etc. It is our experience that the Spirit of God is constantly working upon our lives through different means that is why we say that faith is produced in men by the power of the Holy Spirit.

II. The fruits of faith:

Now, having said that faith is a gift of God, perhaps we would ask the question, "What would be the evidence that we already have this faith?" I call these evidences as the fruits of faith.

From the Scripture lesson that I read, the Apostle Paul enumerated some of these evidences which I would like to take some of them.

1. First, is love. What did Paul mean when he mentioned love as an evidence of faith? I read a Bible commentator who said, " This love is "God's own love growing as his fruits in the hearts of men." - I read a story about a problem daughter: One time, her mother said, "I would like to send her away from our home, but I cannot." Then an author says, "On the Cross, God says to us, 'I should send sinful man forever from my presence, but I cannot. I will keep on loving him... I shall keep on loving man though I suffer.'" Brethren, this is the kind of love which Paul calls as an evidence of faith.

2. Second, is joy. I like the statement from the Interpreter's Bible regarding joy which says, "The joy that was the fruit of the spirit sprang from a life that was gracious and kind, full of goodwill, generous to impart itself to others, glad when they accepted and rejoiced with it, but forgiving and still singing when men rejected and persecuted it." This is the joy as a fruit of our faith.

3. Next, is patience. Patience as the fruit of faith, according to the I.C.C. is the "steadfastness of the soul when provoked, endurance, persistence, long-suffering." and it is contended by an author that, patience as a fruit of faith is a patience with a purpose. And its purpose is to lead the sinners to repentance. Brethren, are we leading sinners to repentance with patience as a fruit of faith?

4. Next, is gentleness. According to the Moffat New Testament Commentary, gentleness as an evidence of faith is "the attitude of the man, who in his dealings with others is never rude, never selfish... where its springs are traced back to the spirit of meekness with which the truly religious man waits upon God." In the Interpreter's Bible, it has been pointed out that for a Christian to be gentle he must "estimate himself soberly, counts others better than himself, and treats them graciously as Christ treated him." This is gentleness as the fruit of Spirit.

5. And finally, self-control. Self-control as an evidence of faith is contended in the I.C.C., "mastery of one's own desires and impulses."

And so these are the fruits of faith or evidences of faith: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Someone has said:

"Faith makes a Christian

Life proves a Christian

*If you are grateful for God's
redeeming love-*

Prove it!"

Amen.

(Delivered on October 4, 1970 at The United Methodist Church, Baguio City, Philippines)