

# VIEW

“...HAVING THE EYES OF YOUR HEART ENLIGHTENED...”  
EPHESIANS 1:18

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## Faith and Baptism

BY FOY E. WALLACE, JR.

The person whom the Bible designates a believer is one who having been persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, accepts him in implicit trust as his Saviour (**John 20:31**). He is not one who has merely assented to gospel truth or fact, but one who has believed with all the heart; a belief that involves every faculty of his intelligent being—his reason, his sensibilities, his will (**Rom. 10:9, 10**). The noun *pistis*, (faith) means confidence, trust. The verb *pisteus* (believe) means adherence to, reliance on. The nobleman's (**Acts 8**) belief with all his heart meant his reliance on what Phillip had preached unto him as essential elements of salvation. His faith in Jesus and his confession of that faith meant nothing less than his acceptance of all terms and conditions of salvation laid down in the preaching of Phillip (**Acts 8:12**). And the conviction of those “pricked in their hearts” on Pentecost (**Acts 2**) was a faith that yielded the willing spirit of obedience in the pleading question, “What shall we do?” Such a faith implies and embraces all necessary conditions named in God's law of pardon.

### Salvation

The commission according to Mark says, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” This salvation is the forgiveness of past sins; pardon, the complete absolution of guilt; remission of sins. But this pardon is an executive act. It takes place in the mind of God in heaven; not in the heart of man on earth. The thing we know as inner consciousness cannot determine by inward feelings that pardon has been granted. Pardon can be known only as God declares it. The man in the penitentiary can know that he is pardoned only as the executive, the Governor, declares it. No warden of such an institution would release an inmate of it on the ground of an inner consciousness that the Governor had pardoned him. Inner consciousness cannot testify to

anything outside of the man himself; it cannot measure or weigh any outward thing. There must be a standard for all such. And God has a law of forgiveness—the sinner is not pardoned until he has complied with it.

### By Faith

The issue is not whether one is saved or justified by faith—to that we all agree. The issue is when is one saved by faith? The Baptist order is repentance before faith, but they do not mean salvation by repentance before faith. The Bible order is faith before baptism—why should a Baptist insist that salvation comes by faith before baptism seeing that they will disavow salvation by repentance before faith in their order of things. True, faith comes before baptism, but one is not saved by faith before baptism any more than one would be saved by repentance before faith in the Baptist order of things. This one thing answers every argument that can be made by a Baptist against baptism on the ground that one is saved by faith and that faith precedes baptism. All passages that declare justification by faith (**Rom. 5:1**) and others of like import we accept and believe and claim. But we deny that any of these passages teach or imply that one is saved by faith before he is baptized. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

### By Faith When

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews lists the men of faith in the former dispensation. By faith they were approved but faith plus what? By faith Abel offered his sacrifice and was justified by it. By faith Enoch moved in godly fear. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called. Try faith alone on any of these examples of justification by faith and see how it works. “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect.” (**Jas. 2:21, 22**).

In further proof that it requires an active faith to produce justification, contrast the cases of the priests and rulers who believed. In one case (Acts 6:7) a great company of priests became obedient to the faith. In the other case (John 12:42) many of the rulers believed but would not confess. Both of these companies of Jewish officials believed; but only one company was justified. It proves that faith only does not save, else both companies would have been saved seeing that they both believed. "Yes see, then, that by works a man is justified and not by faith only." (Jas. 2:24).

### **Faith Plus**

If a man exercises faith but his faith does not exercise him, either the subject has a poor faith or the faith has a poor subject. Some plain passages from the New Testament suggesting some pointed questions will serve to show that mere faith does not save.

First: "But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12) Question: How does a believer exercise the power to become a child of God?

Second: "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." (Acts 11:21) Question: What did these believers do when they turned unto the Lord?

Third: "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again (be converted) that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19) Question: What did these penitent persons do when they turned?

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## **A Few Make History**

BY ROBERT TURNER

Some brethren assume the continuity of a faithful, visible, functioning church, from the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection until now. It must be "assumed" — it can not be proven — nor do I believe either is essential. But on that assumption, there is a "necessary inference" that should shake us up a bit.

If there has always been a "faithful few" it is because there has always been a few who acted independently of the majority — who thought for

themselves — who refused to go along with the elders or the preacher "for the sake of peace." History is filled with proof of continual change which constituted apostasy from the divinely ordained standard. *Such* changes (we do not refer to changes of no scriptural consequences) had to be resisted — by people who knew the difference in essentials and non-essentials, and who refused to accept as a matter of faith or standard for fellowship anything for which there was no divine authority.

In every generation there had to be a few who endured the name "Anti" or its equivalent, and went about the business of maintaining a small (minority) scriptural church regardless of how this affected their secular business and social relations.

The key was, of course, independent Bible study, which directed dedication to Christ rather than to the "party" or popular opinion. The faithful few knew both who and what they believed (2 Tim. 1:12-14), and on this basis they both spoke and acted (2 Cor. 4:13). They had convictions — vital, personal, motivating convictions.

But the folk today who rest their hope upon party affiliation, and seem most anxious to assume the historic continuity of such a party; are often the least informed, and less likely to have strong convictions based upon independent Bible study.

Had you lived in the "dark ages," would you have been among the "faithful few"? We all like to think that we would have been; but the truth can be read in our present day record. Do we stand with the "faithful few" today, regardless of consequences?