

Common Greetings— *Saved by Faith*

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph 2:8–9)

The faith [*pisteos*] of which Paul writes is belief [*pistis*] of God—and in a question I have asked elsewhere, how does faith come? How does belief of God come? Does a person wake up one morning an unbeliever and wake up the following morning a Believer, with the person doing nothing to establish belief/*pisteos*? Yes, this can happen. It can more suddenly than over a day: it can happen within a thought. And the suddenness with which faith comes—or came to a person—will startle those who think that they have faith, but aren't certain.

Faith is a gift of God, not a result of works, not the result of Bible study (a work), not the result of attending church services since the person was a youth, not the result of diligent prayer and fasting, not the result of anything the person can do or say. A person cannot speak faith into existence, and genuine faith cannot be destroyed by the speech of others or by what a person learns during the course of a lifetime (or when taking graduate theology courses); for what else is a gift of God: “now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:22–23).

Faith accompanies the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus; belief of God equates to indwelling eternal life. In John's Gospel, Jesus tells Jews seeking His life, “Truly, truly, I say to you, *whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life*. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24 emphasis added). And,

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. ... How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? (*vv.* 39–40, 44–47)

Indeed, *how can you believe when you receive glory* from others? How can a pastor believe God when the pastor receives accolades from other pastors, from

parishioners, from television personalities, from the reigning prince of this world and those human persons that serve him? And what does it mean to *believe Moses*? Surely the Pharisees would have believed; yet Jesus said to them concerning their belief, “Has not Moses given you the Law? Yet none of you keeps the Law” (John 7:19).

Who is the Christian pastor, the Christian theologian who keeps the Law ... *Christians are not under the Law but under grace* (Rom 6:14), but Paul says, “Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness” (v. 16). Do you, Christian pastor, not know that if you serve sin, with <sin> being unbelief that leads to transgression of the Law (cf. Rom 14:23; 1 John 3:4), you will lose the salvation that you seek? And if you only stand in the pulpit for a paycheck, you have already lost more than you can imagine; so why not believe Moses? Why not take a different course from the one you presently follow? Why not move beyond your peers and actually believe God; for today, you serve the Adversary, spiritually receiving the reward that the Adversary will receive.

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Paul wrote, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom 10:17). However, this isn’t how Paul established faith/belief [*pisteos*] among the holy ones at Corinth. He did so through demonstration of spirit and power: “And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom ... my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Cor 2:1, 4–5).

In Romans 10:17, what English speakers receive in translation as “the word of Christ” is in Greek less certain: the Greek icon translated as “word” is <*rhēmatos*> without a definite article thus not a definite noun, and with the One possessing *rhēmatos* being God/*Theou* in some ancient manuscripts and Christ/*Christou* in others ... there is a difference between God and Christ Jesus even in Trinitarian theology. So let’s try reading the passage in respect to what Paul wrote to the holy ones at Corinth: *Then the faith from hearing and the hearing through utterance of God* — “comes” isn’t in the sentence but is implied, maybe. And the utterance of God is figuratively “too large” to be incorporated in human utterance: not even Jesus, in His human utterances, could speak the words of God without miracles occurring, for the “divine surplus” of utterance coming from the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] surrounds the one delivering the words of God, this surplus of divine breath performing miracles and demonstrations of the power of God.

The Bible is NOT the uttered word of God, but is at best the twice removed shadow of God’s uttered word that could not be re-uttered by a human person without miracles occurring.

On seven Sabbaths in John’s Gospel, Jesus delivered a sermon for God the Father, speaking the Father’s words and performing miracles, with the miracles

Jesus performed accounting for the divine surplus of God's utterance that could not be encapsulated in Jesus' words—and with the Father establishing by when He spoke that on His Sabbaths His words were to be preached. Thus, when Paul spoke in his Hebrew mannerisms, in Hebrew parataxis, Paul would have been speaking the words of God, words too large to be fully conveyed by human utterance; hence, in Paul proclaiming the testimony of God, miracles would have occurred. Manifestations of spirit and demonstrations of the power of God would have occurred. And in hearing Paul's run-on sentences [what parataxis is], the holy ones at Corinth would have had their faith built on demonstrations of spirit and demonstrations of God's power, not on the wisdom of men and the excellent rhetoric of Greek orators.

When examined closely, there is no disagreement between what Paul wrote in Romans 10:17 and what he wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:1–5; for in “hearing” the utterance/*rhematos* of God, the saints at Corinth would have witnessed manifestations of spirit and demonstrations of the power of God. So their faith did not come from human words or human wisdom. Endtime faith does not come from hearing a pastor in a pulpit read Scripture, or hearing a pastor expound Scripture, or the person for him or herself reading Scripture and silently hearing the shadow of the word of God—

Again, Scripture is the imprisoned lifeless shadow of the uttered word of God as recorded by human scribes. Hearing Scripture read performs no miracle in the auditor. The one hearing doesn't suddenly believe God although spiritual insight that did not previously exist may occur to the auditor. But for the most part, parishioners struggle to stay awake as they listen to Scripture being read or expounded from the pulpit; hence sermons have gone from all day long to a few hours long and are down now to a few minutes long, which is about as long as a pastor can hold the attention of parishioners.

Faith doesn't come from hearing a Bible quote read: *My text for today is Matthew 28:18, “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’”* ... Well, that's fine for a *text for today*, but what did Jesus mean by *<all authority>*? He doesn't receive *all authority in heaven and on earth* until dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary on the doubled day 1260 of the seven endtime years of tribulation. Thus, what is it that the pastor or theologian will say about his or her text for the day that can possibly be true? Will the pastor say that Hitler's slaughter of millions had the approval of Christ Jesus who holds all authority on earth? I would hope not. And if Hitler could slaughter millions—and Stalin tens of millions—without Christ Jesus intervening, then is Christ Jesus exercising authority over the kingdom of this world today, or was He in 1943? Is not the Adversary, a murderer from the beginning, still the reigning prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air? Indeed, he is. And he will be through the Second Passover liberation of Israel and then through the 1260 days of the Affliction. The Adversary will oversee the fall of spiritual Babylon (“oversee” in the sense that he will see it happen on his watch, and he will be unable to stop it despite all he attempts). The Adversary will remain the prince of this world—its

reigning king—until the situation here on earth becomes so desperate that if time were not cut short no flesh would be saved alive. For the Elect's sake, time is cut short. Dominion is taken from the Adversary, who is then cast from heaven and to earth and comes seeking the Remnant of Christendom that remains physically alive, this Remnant keeping the Commandments and holding the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17).

The Christian pastor who stands before his or her parishioners and tells them that they do not have to keep the Law by faith, or out of genuine belief of God is a spiritual bastard: this pastor's mother may well have been of Christ, but the pastor's father is the Adversary.

But the Christian pastor who knowingly lies to his or her parishioners about Moses, the *son* (what the name means), and whom Moses represents, perhaps needs to be cut a little slack; for the pastor who preaches as an employee of a sect or of a denomination is really not free to speak the words of God, but must utter from the pulpit the words of those who employ the pastor ... the pastor has a master who is not Christ Jesus, but who is an agent of the still-reigning prince of this world. The pastor is an economic *dog*, chained to a sodomizing ideology that keeps the *dog* humble before parishioners; that keeps the *dog's* fangs from showing. The pastor is the slave of the one whom the pastor serves; thus the pastor isn't free to preach what the pastor really learned in seminary or in graduate school. The *dog* cowers before the *dog's* master—and consider for a moment what this cowering does to the inner self of the pastor who doubts his or her own worth to God. And then I pile on, declaring what the fate of this pastor will be when judgments are revealed.

Is the Christian pastor who preaches a *text for today* truly free to believe God? No, he or she is not. Despite what Paul wrote about being free, no human person is truly free: the person will either serve sin that leads to death or will serve righteousness that leads to life—and the person who serves righteousness will, by faith, keep the Commandments as the outward manifestation of inner belief of God. Therefore, John wrote,

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. *The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.* Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And *everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure.* Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. *No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him.* Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he*

has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. *By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.* But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ***Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*** (1 John 3:1–18 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Does the world know the Roman pontiff? It does, doesn't it? Did the world know Billy Graham? It did, didn't it? How about Bishop Desmond Tutu? So can it be said about them what John wrote concerning sons of God: *the reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Christ Jesus?* No, what John wrote does not apply to the above named *Christians* or to many others, except as John wrote, "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil," with sin being the transgression of the Law which includes the Sabbath commandment.

If a Christian pastor or pontiff does humanly-defined good works such as feeding the hungry and serving the poor, resisting racism, bringing many to Christ, is not this human pastor or pontiff included in the linguistic indentifying query: *Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?* (Matt 7:22) ... indeed, but what will Jesus say to those who have done good works in His name but who refused to keep the Commandments?

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?" And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness."
(Matt 7:21–23)

How is being denied by Christ Jesus when judgments are revealed going to go over with many pontiffs, with many pastors, especially ones who truly served the poor and who sought righteousness as they understood righteousness—and this when the standard for salvation among parishioners and the unchurched is

simply feeding the hungry and giving shelter to the homeless according to Christ Jesus in Matthew's Gospel—

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will place the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

Then He will say to those on His left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?" Then He will answer them, saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25:31–46)

Why the differing criteria? Because pastors and pontiffs set out to teach when they were not called to teach. They became *dogs* to the Adversary—and no *dog* shall inherit the kingdom of God: "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. *Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood*" (Rev 22:14–15 emphasis added).

Faith comes not from hearing the Adversary's *dogs* read and expound Scripture even when these *dogs* say what is true—and occasionally they get Scripture correct. Rather faith comes through seeing evidence of the power of God, this power coming as overspill of hearing God's utterance expressed in human words, this overspill of spirit performing miracles that may be public or private but are recognizable as miracles.

It wasn't the age of miracles that ended in the 2nd-Century CE, but the era when truly born-of-spirit sons of God uttered words God uttered. The age of miracles seemed to end when the Adversary's *dogs* stood in pulpits everywhere. And the age of miracles will return when genuine sons of God called to ministry stand in pulpits, for the call to ministry sets a brother apart from his brethren,

which is why those who speak, those who teach without being called to speak or teach bring condemnation upon themselves even when they do mighty works in Christ Jesus' name.

It has been a while since I posted a piece to this website. In the interim I completed five books, not all of which have been e-published, and I have been limited in the amount of time I can spend writing because of an old back injury that has been making itself known again. So before temporarily quitting this piece, I want to comment on what Phil Robertson said regarding homosexuality: no *dog* will inherit the kingdom, and the man who lays with another man as he would with a woman is a *dog*. There is no condoning of homosexual intercourse, and there never can be. And when the *dogs* howl together and as packs seek to kill "prey," their deeds are being remembered by the Lord who will send even those who have done good works in His name into the lake of fire for teaching others to be lawless. The *dogs* need to repent while there is still time to repent. If they do, they might enter the Kingdom. If they don't, they stand no chance of entering; for it isn't what the flesh has done that determines the fate of the person, but what the inner self believes and desires to do when the inner self is judged.

Hence, the *dogs* of the Adversary need to repent while time remains. Unfortunately, the nature of being the Adversary's *dog* denies the pastor or pontiff the opportunity to repent; for the sodomy committed isn't in the flesh but of the spirit.

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