

The Christian Graces of 2 Peter 1:5-7 – Faith

Peter wrote to Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor – what we now call the country of Turkey. Near the beginning of his second letter to these brethren, he wrote by inspiration that they were to add to their faith characteristics that would keep them from being barren and unfruitful (2 Pet. 1:8). Before they were to add these characteristics, they were to already have faith (2 Pet. 1:5). This article will briefly examine what is meant by the term “faith.”

The writer of Hebrews said, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1 KJV). The ASV reads, “Now faith is **assurance** of things hoped for, a **conviction** of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1 ASV). Faith is the support and evidence of the things for which we hope and cannot see. The writer goes on to say, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Heb. 11:3 KJV). We were not present when God created the world as recorded in Genesis 1, but we believe through faith that it happened exactly as the Scriptures say, because there is evidence of an intelligent designer.

In Scripture, faith is used in two different ways – one’s personal faith and the system of faith. Wayne Jackson wrote:

“Faith” is used in two general senses in Scripture – subjective faith (one’s personal belief) and objective faith (a body of divine revelation). Both senses may here merge. The patriarchs of the past possessed confident faith, but one grounded in the solid testimony that had been conveyed to them (Heb. 11:2). (Jackson 507)

The writer of Hebrews continued by stating without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). Those that desire to come to God are given two conditions: 1) One must believe in the Deity of God and, 2) One must believe that God rewards those who diligently seek Him. It is no wonder that faith is referred to as “the substance of things hoped for” (Heb. 11:1). Faith is the foundation upon which all other things are built.

However, our personal faith alone will not save us. James wrote, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (Jas. 2:17). In reference to what James recorded regarding faith, Guy N. Woods stated:

We should be deeply impressed with the lesson which James teaches here that faith, unattended by unquestioning obedience to the Lord’s will, is as worthless and vain as the expression of empty wishes for the needy with no effort expended to relieve their distressed condition. There is no help for a sick, hungry family in pious platitudes, unaccompanied by assistance; and there is no blessing promised or salvation available to people on the basis of faith without works. (Woods 136)

Truly, faith is indeed the beginning point for all who desire to come to God. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). If we desire to have all of the characteristics mentioned by Peter in the “Christian Graces,” then we must have the proper faith first and foremost.

Works Cited

Jackson, Wayne. *A New Testament Commentary*. Christian Courier Publications , 2012.

Woods, Guy N. *A Commentary on the Epistle of James* . Gospel Advocate Company , 1991.