



# Light from the Word

## Walking in a Living Faith

*“Now the just shall live by faith”<sup>1</sup>*

In our Apostolic Christian Church culture, we use the word faith in many different ways. In this article, we will consider three common usages: our saving faith in Jesus Christ, walking by faith as believers, and the practice of referring to our church denomination as “our faith.”

A true saving faith in Jesus Christ is the basis of our salvation. *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”*<sup>2</sup> This faith—“wherein we stand”—is based specifically in Jesus Christ’s shed blood as the sacrifice for sin. *“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe... Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (atoning sacrifice) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”*<sup>3</sup>

This saving faith must necessarily precede our repentance and conversion as we begin our Christian walk. Works alone, even when accompanied with our best intentions, will never bring us salvation. *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”*<sup>4</sup> *“For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”*<sup>5</sup> Our works (often referred to as spiritual fruit in the Bible) will follow as the result and evidence of a saving faith. *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*<sup>6</sup> Many other scriptures expound upon the proper relationship of faith and works.<sup>7</sup>

This saving faith must grow into a living faith that becomes an integral part of our lives from

beginning to end. *“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith (from beginning to end): as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”*<sup>8</sup> We live for Christ, we trust and obey Him, and we cling to His promises through whatever blessings, tests, or trials may come our way.

Abraham’s strong faith was greatly tested when God commanded him to offer his only son Isaac as a sacrifice. God told Abraham to go to Moriah, a journey of three days, to carry this out. On the way, Isaac asked a question that must have increased the heaviness of Abraham’s burden, *“behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”*<sup>9</sup> Abraham relied solely on his faith in God to reply that He would provide a lamb for the sacrifice. Abraham’s faith and obedience were rewarded, but not until he reached the ultimate point in his trial. God told him, *“By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”*<sup>10</sup> We read in Hebrews that Abraham believed that God was able to raise his son from the dead. *“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”*<sup>11</sup>

Another Old Testament figure, the woman Rahab, was a wonderful example of living by faith and is listed in the “honor roll of faith” in Hebrews 11.<sup>12</sup> Her faith journey began when she first heard of the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea some

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forty years before they arrived at her hometown of Jericho. Though she was once a prostitute (harlot) in that pagan city, she became a believer in God. She had the faith to tell the Israelite spies, “for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath... And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.”<sup>13</sup> Rahab and her family agreed to stay in the house—located on the city wall—and remained there even when the walls came crashing down all around them. Because of her faith and obedience, she and her family were spared from the destruction of the city.<sup>14</sup> She subsequently married into the lineage of Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father,<sup>15</sup> evidence of her living and sustained faith in God.

From these and other examples in the Bible, we see that a living faith brings a strong belief

that what God has promised will certainly come to pass. Faith is a present day confidence of a future reality. Living faith, demonstrated by works, is empowered by God’s grace, which ultimately brings glory to His name.

At times, we might find ourselves using the term “our faith” when we are actually referring specifically to our Apostolic Christian Church brotherhood. No doubt, this occurs because of the closely linked experiences in the church as we live out our life of faith here on earth. However, the expressions “the faith” or “our faith” in the scriptures never refer to a denomination or to a specific group of believers.

Consider the following scriptures where confusion between “church” and “faith” could take place: 2 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 4:5-6; Eph. 4:13; Col. 2:7; 1Tim. 4:1; 2Pet. 1:1; Jude 3. The term “faith” in these scriptures always refers to a firm persuasion of the truthfulness of God, and especially reliance upon Christ for salvation. The intent is certainly

not to diminish the importance of the church, which is the body of Christ,<sup>16</sup> nor do we wish to reduce our love and appreciation for our beloved brotherhood. Rather, we desire to increase our understanding in order to avoid confusion and to encourage a scripturally accurate use of the word “faith.”

May God grant grace that we may grow in our faith and trust in Him.

(Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 10:38

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 5:1-2

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 3:22, 25

<sup>4</sup> Isa. 64:6

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 4:2-3

<sup>6</sup> James 2:26

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 4:1-8, Eph. 2:8-10, Gal. 3:6-18, James 2:17-26

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 1:17

<sup>9</sup> Gen. 22:7

<sup>10</sup> Gen. 22:17-18

<sup>11</sup> Heb. 11:17-19

<sup>12</sup> Heb. 11:31

<sup>13</sup> Josh. 2:11, 13

<sup>14</sup> Josh. 6:23

<sup>15</sup> Mat. 1:5

<sup>16</sup> Col. 1:24

*Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts;  
Consider your ways.  
Haggai 1:5*