

Prayer List

Sierra
Gene
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia
Arley

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 14, No. 15 - January 20, 2012

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

What prophet suffered from a hot east wind after his shade plant was eaten by a worm?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Sennacherib - 2 Kings 19:14

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Think About Faith

David Horton

In Hebrews 11:6, the writer adds "And without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Faith is an integral part of man's fellowship with God. If we have faith it is possible to be "well pleasing" to God. Logically extended, if we disbelieve we "shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). By the same reasoning we understand that by faith we have access into the favorable regard of God (Romans 5:2). All of these passages of Scripture point to the importance of our having faith in God, understanding what it is, how it is obtained, and why it is important.

The noun "faith" may be understood by illustrating its negative and positive character in the life of Abraham. Referring to Abraham, Paul reveals, "Who in hope believed against hope ... And without being weakened in faith ... yet, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to

perform. Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:18–22).

According to sensational standards Abraham and Sarah were beyond hope of bearing children (Romans 4:19). However, God promised Abraham a child through Sarah (Genesis 17:19). Based upon the immutable word of God, and His eternal power and divinity (Romans 1:19–20) Abraham was fully assured that he would have a child through his wife Sarah. This full assurance in the promise of God gave substance to Abraham’s longing and expectation for Isaac. Though the birth had yet to occur, Isaac’s birth was real and certain to Abraham (Hebrews 11:1). Therefore, Abraham kept his eyes locked upon the promise of God. By faith Abraham had the strength to move forward in obedience to whatever God asked of him. Thus Abraham glorified God and gained access to His favorable regard.

Faith’s negative character strengthens the previous positive description of faith in God. In considering the sensational evidence, Abraham refused to doubt the promise and ability of God. Abraham did not allow the standards of appearance to render his full assurance in God impotent (verse 19). He resisted wavering in his walk with God through “unbelief.” Unbelief saps the power and confidence needed to walk forward in obedience to God. Consequently one who is not fully assured of God’s promise and His ability to perform it, will become “two-souled” (James 1:8). Through senseless doubting one will become impotent to enter the favorable regard of God (Romans 4:20). This was not the life of Abraham. Thus, God laid it to Abraham’s account that he was righteous (Romans 4:22).

Abraham’s faith is a full assurance in who God is, and in His ability to fulfill what He has promised. This faith empowers the sight and energy of one to seek only to glorify God, and is

animated in the unwavering obedience to the will of God. It is therefore unreasonable to think that one could have this faith and refuse to seek and obey God’s will. Abraham had a complete faith in God, so also must we (James 2:20–26).

Since faith in God is a full assurance of His divinity and power to carry out His will, it must be produced by some joint operation of man’s intellect with God’s evidence. This evidence of God’s everlasting power and divinity is realized in the order and superior design of the universe. This evidence is corroborated by the observable laws of nature, such as the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics, the laws of conservation and increasing entropy (Acts 14:17; Romans 1:19–20). Our full assurance in the salvation through Jesus the Christ rests in the evidence found in the Gospel (John 20:30–31; Romans 1:16–17; 1 Corinthians 2). It is the system which, upon entering the intellect of man, produces the faith needed by a willing heart to have access into the grace of God (Romans 5:2). It is sufficient evidence to add substance to the things hoped for, and bring to reality the things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). This is the evidence of which Paul writes, “So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17).

Faith is an integral part of our fellowship with God (Hebrews 11:6), for mortal man cannot be everywhere at all times to witness every event during the course of this existence. Instead we may investigate the various forms of evidence, and reason out the most reliable and secure course to follow in this life. Regarding man’s origin, purpose for existing, and ultimate destiny we must rely upon faith. The Christian walks by faith in God (2 Corinthians 5:7). Holding God’s evidence gives man his highest worth and dignity. If we continue in the faith of Abraham it will consummate in the eternal salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:9).