



FAITH: A Whole New Way of Seeing

Faith releases the power of God. It moves mountains, heals people, destroys obstacles, connects us to the transforming power of God's love. Faith is essentially *a deep trusting*. Despite our fickle feelings, faith is a commitment to focus on God's New Reality and learn to live according to that Reality. Jesus describes this reality as the Kingdom of God. He paints a picture of it in parables, questions, statements, and miracles. This Kingdom is a place of joy and peace and fulfillment and love. And it is a Reality that exists right now all around us and even within us! We don't have to go searching for it. But, in order to experience it, we need to learn to see with new eyes... the eyes of faith.

In the book of Galatians, Paul describes what is necessary for a growing faith:

1. **A commitment to *letting go* of the old ways of seeing life.** We tend to judge ourselves and others by how well we keep certain rules or standards. While rules can be helpful in a limited way, our attachment to them can also block us from experiencing God and life in their fullness. So this begins with a choice to be more aware of our attitudes and motivations. We read the Bible to pick up clues as to how our old thinking does not match up with God's thinking. Then, with the support and encouragement of others, we learn to release the old and get ready for new ways to think. Paul talks about entering into the crucifixion experience with Christ. This is where our old, self-centered way of seeing dies. God will provide daily opportunities to let go of the old controlling, protective self. As we stop feeding the hungry ego, its hold on us fades. The faith journey begins.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. - Galatians 2:20

2. **A commitment to *receiving* the generous, expansive love of God through Jesus Christ.** Religion, including Christianity, tends to center on how well you follow the rules. Jesus centered in on the quality of our *relationships*: with God, with others, with ourselves. Jesus also began with a foundational knowledge that the very essence of God is Love and that God's Passion is for us to experience and live in and grow in and radiate that Love wherever we go. But we cannot earn this Love. We can only surrender to it, falling

into the arms of a loving Father who desires nothing but the best for His Sons and Daughters. Paul speaks about this as being adopted by God into a loving family.

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" - Galatians 4:6

3. **A commitment to learning how to *align* myself with the movement of the Spirit in all circumstances.** Paul talks about "walking in the Spirit". This means we are to keep in step with what God's Spirit is doing in our lives and in the lives of those around us: revealing truth, embracing, directing, encouraging, empowering. We become new as we begin to get our feet wet in that river of God called the Holy Spirit. We begin to feel the flow and movement of the Spirit in more and more situations. We begin to hear the whisper of the Father speaking to our hearts. When we actually respond to that whisper, that flow, then life begins to open up for us like a bud that opens up into a beautiful flower! We see others and ourselves in new, compassionate, and generous ways. Our old angry, controlling thoughts are exposed and new door opens to us: to trust Jesus as a faithful Companion who will show us a whole new way to live. To be sure, we learn this bit by bit. This is a process! Try to treat yourself (and your "failures") with patience and compassion. God does! Yet, with each "success", the flower bud opens up a little more.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- Galatians 5:22-23

Do you want to grow in a faith that will let you experience more and more of God's Amazing Presence? Are you courageous enough to step into a Whole New Reality with Jesus as your Guide? Hang onto your seat belt! We, at Lighthouse Church, have also buckled our seat belts and would count it a privilege to encourage you along the way. Contact us and we'll find ways to discover Kingdom-living together!



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