



In rereading a book given to me by a close friend, a question was posed that I think defines the role of any want-to- be Christian. Regardless of when, where or why you found religion, what are you doing about it now?

For me, the answer lies in the fact that faith is a verb, not a noun and requires an act of some sort. That act is supposed to be precipitated by the understanding what you do is based upon what you believe. For example, if you believe and, as a consequence know Jesus is who He is, then do you gossip, spread rumor, innuendo, half truths, or better yet, do your passions control your tongue or your predilections? Do you forgive and forget? Or do you forgive and never forget? How about that turn the other cheek thing?

It seems faith as a verb demands a behavior grounded in a belief in the eternal; in the fact that all things have a purpose far beyond the realm of today. Mercy, charity, love, all have a place in our everyday experiences that take us beyond our everyday circumstances. If your faith is so shallow that the only thing that touches your heart is just that, those things that you can see, touch and feel, then you've missed the point of eternal existence. Faith in the Almighty, literally means claiming (verb) the life that Jesus promised, a more abundant one. That life did not begin the day you were born and will not end the day you die; so says every so called Christian on the planet. But how you and I handle this short existence on earth goes a long way towards the quality of our after (this) life. "All things work together for good according to the Lord and those who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8: 28. The consequence of faith then means realizing and understanding that according to God's purpose, our role is clear. One must act on the Word of God as given to us by Christ. One must live faith rather than quote faith. One must be church rather than merely go to one.

So often in scripture we are reminded that Jesus lived a life that was pleasing to the Lord, His Father. He was appalled at the use of "The Law" as an excuse not to fulfill the purpose of "The Law." He accepted any and everyone, who believed in the Son of God as God. He therefore demanded appropriate behavior from apostles, elders, gentiles and sinners alike. The higher up the religious hierarchy, the more Jesus expected you to do for the not yet enlightened. The more faith you professed, the more knowledge you acquired, the more selfless you were to become. I guess what I'm trying to say is that the dynamics of faith, over time, will dictate that your lifestyle reflect the importance of spiritual consequence rather than emotional or physical retribution.

"Therefore brothers and sisters, we have an obligation..." Romans 8: 12. We must live according to the Spirit within us rather than by the passions that would otherwise corrupt us. As a Christian, don't act like you don't know the difference.

"We have different gifts according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophecy, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage..." Romans 21: 6-8. This scripture makes my point for me. Faith is by all means a verb, active in its pursuit of meeting every person on equal ground, resilient in its defense against the frailties of the flesh and honest in its understanding that life is eternal. This physical world we live in is but an entrance exam for a universal reality planned and promised to us all. The good news is Christ already took and passed the final. May God bless and keep you always.{jcomments on}