

CHARACTERISTIC ONE: FAITH

Lesson 2: Our Faith in Action: Part 1

In our previous lesson, we talked about the two aspects of faith. We elaborated on the importance of our foundation of faith, that it must be built upon Christ and His Words alone. In this lesson, we will discuss our faith in action. Our faith in action can also be broken down into two parts. First, how do we walk out our faith in our daily lives and second, how do we have faith to believe God in situations that seem impossible. Today, we'll discuss the first.

Faith is useless unless we put action behind it. One can say all day that they're a Christian, but if the fruit of the Spirit is not being shown in their lives by their actions it means nothing. Jesus said in Matthew 7:16-20:

¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.¹

Fruit on a natural tree is something you can see, touch and taste, as well as something that brings nourishment to our physical bodies. In the life of a person, fruit is their character that is reflected in their works or actions. When people come around you and I, what fruit are they able to pull from our lives? Do they see, touch and taste "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."?² If not, why? I think many believers, especially in this younger generation, have bought into the lie that says, "I'm saved, so it doesn't really matter how I talk, or act or what I do, because Jesus already paid the price for my sin," Basically, the thought is you can do whatever you want as long as you prayed a prayer. It's what is termed the hyper-grace movement. In other words, it teaches that God's grace is already there for us, therefore we can live how we want and still be blessed and make it into heaven.

However, there are major problems with this line of reasoning. First, it flies in the face of how Jesus, the Apostles and the early believers lived as examples for us to follow. Second, it goes against the heart and message of the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the New Testament authors. The Apostle Paul when confronting this very line of reasoning in the early church said in Romans 6:1-3:

¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.³

