

## The Simplicity of Faith

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By Toni Babcock

It's an unsettling thought, but those of us who profess to know and love the Savior can still teeter on the edge of surrendering our full assurance of faith to that old accuser of the brethren we know of as the devil. God's word wouldn't exhort us to "let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering," if it wasn't possible to do the opposite.

I don't speak of people entertaining false hopes of being a Christian, I speak of those who have the witness of a life changed by faith; a faith that produces more than spiritual safety after they die; people who in spite of God's ocean of promise, still find themselves prisoners of a strategy born in enemy ranks to destroy their faith and ruin their testimony.

Satan has more than one strategy to nullify the victory of the cross of Christ. Corrupting the simplicity of the gospel is a primary target. This is where Satan gets a toehold in the mind, and ushers in his condemnations and lies. Christians awakened to their sins, who for whatever reason possess a weak and faltering faith, can easily fall victim to the power of the enemy if they don't arm themselves with the truth. If Satan can undermine our faith, he can render us useless for spreading the good news of God's grace to others.

I have found two stumbling blocks that make me an easy prey for the Enemy:

1. Comparing my spiritual experience with that of another.

To combat this temptation, I have come to recognize that faith is not a formula, it is the work of a Sovereign God imparted to me in His own time through saving faith in His Living Son. Formulas have a nasty habit of turning into pre-requisites. If I have chosen Christ, it is because he has already chosen me. I need to be positively certain I stand only on the solid ground of Christ and his finished work on the cross.

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise." II Corinthians 10:12

2. Possessing an irrepressible need to please others.

After I surrendered my life to Christ I was tempted to question if saving faith in God's word is actually enough; perhaps I was missing something I needed to do to make sure God was pleased with my surrender and to ensure I had a right to believe God's promises. Maturity in Christ has enabled me to place my full confidence in Christ and his work on the cross without conditions. I don't have any "rights" without Christ. Zippo.

Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, I now allow myself to trust in Christ exclusively, and try to

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avoid falling into a performance based approach to pleasing people or God. In the meantime, in whatever way my Enemy may present his case against me with his ever so clever temptations, I recall God's infallible word: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) and "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God," (Romans 8:8) Could God make His words any more plain??

What is the best advice I could give for those who struggle with a weak faith? I find it in Hebrews 10:22-23: "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promise."

Thank God for his unspeakable Gift!

*Toni Babcock is a freelance Christian writer from South St. Paul. She enjoys writing short stories for children and young people, as well as memoirs, poetry and spiritual essays.*

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