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Without Faith

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6

1. “But without faith” - χωρις δε πιστεως

The word *choris* means without something, or apart from something. This has the idea that there has to be something, like the main ingredient in a recipe, without which one cannot have the item. You can't have oyster stew without the oysters.

Here the idea is pleasing God. All true believers in Jesus Christ have the desire within them to please the Father. This desire exists because of the act of regeneration, receiving a new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit. It exists because we were recreated in the image of Jesus Christ whose whole being on earth was wrapped up in the idea of wanting to please the Father.

The problem is that most believers today are turning from the biblical approach to pleasing God and employing things that they come up with. Some turn to ritualism and formalism, others to morality and good works, others to programs, entertainment and the big extravaganza, and still others to emotional depletion and bizarre behavior. But the Word of God is quite clear on the matter of what it takes to please God **and it is only faith that pleases him!**

Now when we look at faith we must take it in its entirety. My On line book, “True Faith”, covers every aspect of faith and can be very helpful to the believer who truly wants to live by faith. But for our study here we will simply look at the aspects of subjective faith and objective faith. That is the act of believing and what it is that we believe. There has to be both, **and for the believer in Christ the object of his biblical faith always has to be the Word of God and its doctrines!**

And for our purposes we call this dynamic the metabolization of Bible Doctrine by faith. This will include the claiming of the promises of God by faith, and it also calls for the believer-priest to be assembling in a local church under the doctrinal ministry of a man with the Pastor-Teacher gift, either in a face to face setting, or by alternate means such as cassette tapes, MP3's, telephone hookups, etc..

It is there in the local church, with personal sins confessed to God, 1 John 1:9, operating in the new nature under the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit, concentrating with positive volition on the doctrine that is being taught; **he metabolizes it by faith, (*epignosis*), where it now becomes spiritual phenomenon in his new nature**, the human spirit, and then later on applying it to life situations. **This is what pleases God and it is the only thing that pleases God!**

2. “*It is impossible to please him:*” - αδυνατον ευαρεστησαι

The words *it is* and *him* are not in the original, but were supplied by the translators. It actually says, “***Impossible to please***”. This is a very short statement; almost one that is tense, to emphasize, to drive home the point that **without faith it is absolutely impossible to please God!** The word for *impossible*, *adunaton*, meant to be unable to do something, to lack the power or ability to accomplish an act. And our English word impossible puts it very well.

Faith is not a work; it is non meritorious; it is not a morality issue; and it is not an intelligence issue. There is merit involved in faith, not in the one exercising the faith, but in the one in whom one trusts. And in biblical faith all merit rests in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The word for pleasing God is *euaresto* which takes in the idea of the totality of God's essence. God is righteous, just, fair, sovereign, kind, gentle, compassionate, holy, gracious, merciful, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, truthful, faithful and holy. So whatever it takes to please God it must satisfy everyone of these attributes!

Some people will focus on just one or two of God's attributes, say his love and mercy, and focus in on just these two to please God. But it won't work. You cannot just focus in on a couple of his attributes to the exclusion of the rest! **For God to be pleased every aspect of his nature must be satisfied.**

God will not deny any part of himself. God is perfect and he is perfect in everyone of his attributes. We cannot appeal to just one of his attributes to the exclusion of the rest. God is indivisible. **So if man is going to please God it must be done in such a way that every attribute of God is pleased.**

And once again we come down to the matter of faith. Faith does not stand up against God's sovereignty; it does not offend his righteousness or justice; it doesn't conflict with his omnipotence, omnipresence, or omniscience; it creates no problems for his kindness, gentleness, kindness, patience, truthfulness, faithfulness and mercy; and it works in complete harmony with his grace.

So faith is the ideal vehicle for pleasing God; so ideal that God counts faith in Christ as righteousness because of its non meritorious nature. “*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*” Romans 4:5

And faith or trust is the opposite of works. Works is where man is doing the works, man's ideas, man's strength, man's activity, while faith is the cessation of works and simply trusting God to do the work. **Faith works in complete harmony with grace, while works rejects God's grace.** “*And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*” Romans 11:6

3. “*For he that cometh to God*” - γαρ ...τον προσερχομενον τω θεω

“*The one coming to God*”, *ton proserchomenon*, is a reference to the worshiper or petitioner. It speaks of the believer in Christ as the one who is coming to God with a prayer request, or one who is worshiping God.

With the present participle of *proserchomai* it tells us that this passage has in mind the believer who is taking in the Word of God in a local church, under the teaching ministry of a Pastor-Teacher, walking in faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit, and now comes to God with a prayer request.

For the believer living out in the world system in a state of carnality, negative to Bible Doctrine, (what some call backsliding or reversionism), there is a different procedure. He will have to approach God in prayer, but he will need to petition God for a change of mental attitude toward His Word and His will, and to re identify himself under the authority of the teaching ministry of a Pastor Teacher out of some local church.

Now **there are two requirements** for this believer as he or she approaches the throne of God with their prayer request and they both deal with faith! **They must believe that God exists and they must believe that he will reward them.**

4. “*Must believe*” - πιστευσαι ... δει

Now something is laid upon the believer that they must do! They cannot come to the eternal God, who is their Father, mechanically as the pagans do in vain repetition, or in unbelief. They **must** believe! And when found, as we have here, in the imperative mood of command, it tells us that this is something that is **absolutely imperative**.

The word *must* is *dei* and is one of the most compelling words in the Greek language. It speaks of something that is absolutely necessary, something that one has to do, something that is mandatory. In the military it refers to the duty of the soldier. It speaks of all of us who cannot escape two things, death and judgment.

There are certain things in life that one has no choice in the matter. There are somethings that we have to do. The soldier is bound by duty to stay in the battle and fight. We are bound by the oaths that we have sworn concerning country and constitution.

What *dei* does is take that strong compulsion, where we have to do something, and applies it to the concept here. What it's saying is that when we come to God with our prayer requests it is absolutely necessary that we believe that God exists and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him!

The Apostle James reflects the same thought in the matter of believers asking God for wisdom in their lives, “*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*” James 1:6,7

5. "That he is" - οτι εστιν

Eimi is the verb that denotes existence. It tells us that God actually does exist. The present tense is used to show a continuous or linear action. **God exists; he has always existed, and he always will exist.**

Even the name of God in the Old Testament, *Yahweh*, speaks of this unique aspect of God, an aspect that only he possesses. It means "*I Am*", which is to say, "I exist, I have always existed and I always will exist". When translating this idea into the English language we would say that God, *Yahweh*, is "*The Eternal One*".

Throughout the Gospels Christ would repeatedly refer to himself by the phrase, *ego eimi*, or "*I, I Am*", instead of using the pronoun *me*. This is an important distinction for if he used the word *me*, he would simply be referring to himself as an individual, as just another person. But by using the combination of *ego eimi*, he was telling the disciples that he was the *I Am* of the Old Testament, that he was *Yahweh*!

Now when God says that he exists, that he has always existed and that he always will exist, he's telling us that he's eternal. But he's also telling us that he has **self existence!** He's saying that whatever it takes to live forever is possessed solely by him and is within him. He is not dependent upon some other thing or some other Being for his existence.

Now every other creature in the universe, angels, man and animals is dependent upon God for their existence, **but God is dependent on no one for his existence.** That's why it says that God alone is immortal, "*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*" 1 Timothy 6:16 Even the Christian puts on their immortality at the resurrection, "*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*" 1 Corinthians 15:54

Now it might seem a little strange to some, something so easy and obvious, that we must believe that God exists. But it is one of the things that the Christian must believe; he must believe that God does exist, that he has always existed and that he always will exist!

Even though there are many atheists and agnostics in the world today, those who deny the existence of God, and those who are unsure about it, we would be surprised to know how many people there are who believe the concept of that there is a God, but deep down inside doubt it. And what this is getting into is the area of what do we really believe at the core of our existence. **Do we really believe that God does exist? Or are we just hoping that God exists?**

And the second area that we get into is, **what do we believe about this God?** Do we believe that he loves us? Do we believe that he wants to bless us? Do we believe that he wants to answer our prayers and bless us? This is all a part of God being a Rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

6. “*And that he is a rewarder*” - και ... μισθαποδοτης γινεται

The verb *ginomai* signifies that there has become a change of state or condition and can be translated as to become. God becomes something that he was not before; he becomes a rewarder of those that diligently seek him.

God is eternal and he is unchanging. And why not! He is already perfect. But he does change how he deals with an individual. The unbeliever is under the wrath of God, but when he believes on Christ as his Savior he now is under his grace.

Under the concept of the justice of God and the sinfulness of man, his righteousness demands that he deal with man on the basis of his justice. But now that Christ has paid the penalty for our sins, and we have believed on Christ as our Savior and now are considered righteous before God, now God can be a rewarder to us. But this is based upon the condition of diligently seeking him.

The word for *rewarder*, *misthapodes*, referred to the payment of wages due to the individual who worked for them. But basically it refers to what one receives back to him as the consequences of his actions, whether they are good or bad. Because of this it referred to the concept of both reward and punishment. One is **rewarded**, (paid back), for **doing what's right**; and **punished**, (paid back), for **doing what's wrong**.

God dealt with his OT people, Israel, in the same way. “*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*” Jeremiah 17:10 And in the NT as well, “*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*” Galatians 6:7

This ought to be a source of comfort and encouragement for the believer in Christ, even the believer under discipline. How so, you say? Because if we are under discipline, it's because our attitude and actions are offensive to God. So all we need to do is get back under the intake and application of the Word and he will turn our cursing into blessing!

Sooner or later most believers will get tired of where they are at in their spiritual lives and start to want to have God's blessings upon them. This positive desire will lead to faith, and then to hope, and then to a goal, and on to a change of mind toward the Word, where they now can start pursuing after that end. That is to say, that **they will start seeking God in their lives and then he will become a rewarder to them**.

This concept of being rewarded is not based upon our works, or our own works of self righteousness. It's based upon following the protocol plan of God that he has established for us. It's based upon living by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit, living in the new nature, being separated from the world system, upon taking in the teaching of the Word of God in our lives and applying it to our day to day living. And the concept of faith is paramount to this whole operation because it's only faith that pleases the Father! He even gives us the faith as we take in his Word. “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17

7. “Of those who diligently seek him” - τοις εκζητουσιν αυτον

The first thing that we note is that we must be seeking the true God, *Yahweh*, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not to be seeking after money, material things, our own desires, careers, fame, glory, security, or anything else, only him. The accusative of direct object shows whom the action of seeking is directed at – *Yahweh*. And not what you want God to do for you, but seeking God himself.

So many believers today think that they will be blessed by God, or wonder why they aren't blessed by God, all the while they are seeking after the things in life that they want: money, success, material things, etc.. They don't realize that the secret to having God's blessings on you in life; the thing by which God will reward us, is to be seeking after him.

The present active participle of *ekzeteo* tells us that we must make a conscious choice of our own free will to do this, and secondly it must become a way of life for us. It cannot be a hit or miss thing. Day in, day out we take in the Word of God, pray and seek after the Lord in our lives.

The participle tells us a lot. I work with wood from time to time, but I'm not a carpenter. I work with the flowers from time to time, but I'm not a gardener. I put band aids on my fingers, but I'm not a doctor. If I want to be known as one who does this full time, a gardener, jeweler, carpenter, etc., I would use the participial form.

Now that's the idea here with the one who diligently seeks after the Lord. It can't be a hit or miss, start and stop sort of thing, but something that the believer devotes their entire life to; something that is their number one priority.

Yes he has to work for a living; yes he has a family to take care of; yes he has responsibilities, but his number one thing is seeking after the Lord. His entire life is devoted to that and everything else is second.

Now the word for *seek* is *ekzeteo* and it's the intensified use of the word. Apathy, indifference, laziness, sloppiness, lack of discipline and commitment, and failure to put yourself out to reach the goal will not carry the day here.

The action of seeking involves the will, the mind, the heart, the commitment toward the goal and the actions to carry it out. It involves the whole person and with *ek* prefixed to it, it intensifies the concept even more!

We basically live in a lazy society. People change their TV with a remote; we don't even have to get up any more. We order a hamburger and get it 35 seconds later. Very few people are committed to anything, other than the personal gratification of their lusts. But here's one area where the believer is going to have to change and put themselves out. If they want God to bless them in their lives, then they're going to have to start putting him first over everything else. They are going to have to learn to diligently be seeking after God. And when they do, they will find that he will reward them.

8. Now there are several areas where the believer in Christ will be rewarded by the Lord. *“And, behold, I come quickly; and my **reward** is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12*

There is a reward for being persecuted. This is where one's testimony for Jesus Christ and one's stand for Bible Doctrine causes them to suffer financially, socially, or physically, as well as having to leave an area. *“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your **reward** in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Matthew 5:12*

For receiving a prophet or righteous man. That is to say, those who identify with these men and support them will be rewarded. *“He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's **reward**; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's **reward**.” Matthew 10:41*

All suffering for the sake of Christ will be rewarded. *“And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your **reward** is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” Luke 6:20,23*

For doing the will of the Father in this life and not pursuing after one's own designs. *“For if I do this thing willingly, I have a **reward**: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.” 1 Corinthians 9:17*

We will be rewarded for all our labors concerning the Gospel and the Word of God. *“ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own **reward** according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.” 1 Corinthians 3:6-9*

And in this passage for diligently seeking after God. *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a **rewarder** of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6*

When Christ returns to earth to establish the Father's kingdom he is going to reward every believer in Christ. As the old saying goes, “Life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.” Even those things that we thought were small and insignificant will not go unnoticed by the Lord. One's actions in this life play a major role in the reward given to us at the judgment seat of Christ. They determine our wealth, our commendations, our role and position for all eternity.

But the key here is diligently seeking after the Lord, which takes in the idea of the whole person, our thoughts, our actions and decisions in life. The whole person has to zealously pursue after God. A pivotal aspect of this is seeking after the truth of God's Word and applying it to one's life. I'm afraid many believers are all excited about their church programs, but not the truth of God's Word.

If *Yahweh*, the God that we are to be diligently seeking after, is the God of Truth, and His Son is the incarnate Truth, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, then the truth of God's Word, for us to learn it, study it, believe it and live by it, should be the highest priority for the believer in Christ, assuming that they are believers in Christ.

Also entailed in seeking after God is the utilization of the many spiritual grace provisions that God has supplied us where we can fulfill this condition: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the filling of the Holy Spirit, the leading of the Holy Spirit, the act of regeneration, the new man, confessing our sins to God 1 John 1:9, sitting under the doctrinal ministry of a Pastor Teacher out of a local church, fellowshiping with other believers, having access to the throne of grace, prayer, etc..

But we must remember what this verse is talking about. It's about the believer in Christ coming to God with his or her prayer requests! The context of this passage is not about salvation, but our post salvation relationship with God. As Hebrews 4:16 tells us, "*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*"

All believers know that they are to pray to God, most pray to God continuously, we are even commanded to let our requests be known to God through the vehicle of prayer. But what this passage is bringing out is the matter of faith when we come to God in our prayers. We are to believe that God actually does exist; and we are to believe that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him!

9. No doubting. "*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*" James 1:6,7

Wherever you go through the Word you will find the concept of faith involved in God's dealings with us. So we have to ask, why is faith so important? And the reason why is because God either deals with us on the basis of his justice, or on the basis of grace. And **only faith is compatible with his grace.**

There is that which man can do in his works, his ideas, his planning, his strength, his activity; and there is that which man cannot do; all he can do is trust. In fact, this is how we became Christians in the first place. We stopped working for our salvation; we stopped trying to be good enough for God and instead we trusted in Christ as our Savior. "*And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*" Acts 16:30,31

James 1:5-6 deals with the believer in Christ going to God in prayer asking for wisdom in his life, but we notice that the Apostle is very clear in the matter, when we do go to God with our prayer requests **we must approach him in faith believing that he is going to grant the request!** For God to deal with us in the concept of grace there must be faith on our part. Faith that God does exist; faith that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him; and faith that he will grant our requests.

“*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.*” The Greek has it as, αἰτεῖτω δε ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος. But let him be asking in the sphere of faith nothing wavering. The word for waver is *diakrino*, and it meant to go back and forth between two positions, or between two viewpoints.

I don't know if the word doubting carries the thought very well. It really means **to go back and forth between believing and not believing**. It's like the old way of plucking the petals of a daisy saying, “he loves me, he loves me not”. What it's saying is to be of the persuasion one moment that he is going to grant the request, then the next moment you don't believe he will.

James is a very practical book and what he tells us, of course is theological in nature, but it's also very practical as to things concerning the Christian way of life. And here he's stressing the importance of faith in our prayers. He's saying that when we do ask God for wisdom, or anything else for that matter, our prayers must be made in the sphere of faith and not going back and forth between faith and non belief.

10. **The necessity of faith** when approaching the Father is also brought out in one of the Gospel passages. “*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*” Matthew 21:22 We could expand this translation to say, “***And whatever things you ask for, και παντα οσα αν αιτησητε, by means of prayer, εν τη προσευχη, believing, πιστευοντες, you shall receive, ληψεσθε.***”

Whatever things opens the door for every sort of prayer request the believer can have. Of course there are the conditions listed in other places that they are according to the will of God and that they do not proceed out of our lusts. But **basically we're not limited by what we can pray for, but by our lack of faith!**

The next thing we see is that **prayer is the vehicle by which we form our prayer requests to God**. *In the prayer*, or in the sphere of praying, tells us that the royal family of God on earth is to be asking God for things by means of prayer.

The next word *believing, pisteuontes*, is the present active participle of the verb *pisteuo*, to believe. Now the action of the present participle takes place at the same time as the action of the main verb, which tells us that **while we are praying to God for whatever it is we want or need we are to be believing that he will grant our request!**

And the last word *lepesthe* from *lambano*, *you will receive*, is in the future tense with the indicative mood, which stresses the idea of **the absolute certainty of something place at a point in time in the future!** There is nothing “iffy” about this idea. It's not that God **might** grant our requests, but that he absolutely will! And it will be done at some point in time in the future from the point of time of the prayer request.

It's vitally important for us to grasp the necessity for faith in our life before God. Faith in our decisions, faith in our walk in life, and faith when we go to God with our requests for our wants and needs.

11. **Faith comes from the Word of God.** “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” *αρα η πιστις εξ ακοης η δε ακοη δια ρηματος θεου.* Romans 10:17

But just as important is for us to understand how we can get the faith necessary to believe God in these matters! Many believers will say that they don't have that much faith, while others will look around and say this or that person has more faith than they do. While many use emotions and other things in their church services to try to work up faith in their souls. I guess they never broke the pep rally habit they learned in High School.

Faith does not come from our emotions, or our sincerity, or from any other religious activity so commonly found today. Faith comes to us through the teaching of the Word of God. It as we study, learn, concentrate on and believe the different doctrines and promises we are exposed to that faith is developed in our souls!

Faith is also a new man operation. **The old man cannot activate the faith necessary in these areas, neither does it want to!** So we have to be operating in our new natures. Which means that we must be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:6 tells us, “*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*” Which actually says that faith is activated by the operation of agape love. *αλλα πιστις δι αγαπης ενεργουμενη.* As taught before, **the agape mental attitude inspire faith ideas!**

This passage in Romans 10 is dealing with the matter of salvation and the need for personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. And as Paul develops the passage he builds up to the place of faith in Christ, and then he goes on to say that the faith necessary to believe on Christ actually comes from the hearing of the Word of God, or the doctrines that pertain to the person and saving work of Jesus Christ.

God gives us the faith to believe on His Son, we do not possess that kind of faith ourselves, and it comes to us through being exposed to His Word. If we need the kind of faith to believe on Christ to be saved, then he gives us the doctrines concerning the person and saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection from the dead. If we're having a hard time over the fear of losing our salvation, then God will give us the doctrines on eternal security for our faith in that area. If we're having a hard time with the area of sin and guilt in our lives, he gives us 1 John 1:9 and doctrines concerning how the atonement took away our sin, our guilt and our shame.

Hebrews 4:16 states, “*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*” We see that God's throne is a throne of grace, which means that God is now dealing with us on the basis of grace. And what this means to us is that we must come to him, not only in boldness, but in faith believing that God will hear our prayers and grant our requests. And if we lack the faith, we need to go back to the filling of the Holy Spirit and concentrating on his promises.

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