

# The Life of Faith

by Thomas Reade

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*The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of living a life of faith in Christ, highlighting justification by faith and the necessity of humility and good works as evidence of genuine faith.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 62:5, Isaiah 64:6, Habakkuk 2:4, Luke 18:13, John 14:6, Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 4:9, 1 Peter 2:24

**Topics:** "Justification By Faith", "Salvation Through Christ"

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## Description

Thomas Reade preaches about the life of faith, emphasizing that believers receive all spiritual life through Christ, who is their refuge and source of strength. He contrasts the doctrine of justification by faith alone with the merit of works, highlighting the importance of faith in Christ's righteousness for salvation. Reade explains the impossibility of achieving salvation through human efforts and the need for a saving knowledge of oneself and reliance on Jesus. He urges believers to renounce self-righteousness, embrace humility, and trust solely in the finished work of Jesus for acceptance with God.

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## Transcript

### 34. THE LIFE OF FAITH

"The just shall live by his faith." Hab. 2:4

The life of the redeemed through Christ Jesus is a life of faith. Being united to the glorified Head of the mystical body, the Church, believers receive all their spiritual life, all their vital influence from above. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. All his people live by and through Him. He is their hiding-place, their refuge from every danger; their life is hidden with Christ in God; because he lives, they shall live also. Thousands call themselves Christians, who know nothing of the life of faith. They are zealous for their Church, but it is a party zeal. Some floating images of the truth pass through their minds, but no abiding principles of the Gospel influence or sanctify their hearts. There is a wide difference between speculative and experimental religion. The one, is the religion of the head, the other, the religion of the heart. If the mind is merely enlightened, the soul resembles a star-lit night in winter- clear, but cold. When the heart is brought under the influence of the Sun of Righteousness, the soul, abounding in the fruits of the Spirit, presents the lovely appearance of summer- all is warmth and beauty.

The merit of works is the doctrine of the Church of Rome. The doctrine of justification by faith alone, without the deeds of the law, is the peculiar characteristic of the gospel, and forms a touchstone whereby

to judge of the soundness or unsoundness of Protestant churches. The doctrine of justification by faith through the righteousness of Christ, as it brings the highest glory to God, so it secures the best interests of holiness in the heart of the believer. The fact is, at once, both true and striking, that the very individuals who renounce their own works in the article of their justification before God, and therefore are charged with encouraging licentiousness, are the very individuals who, from their anxiety to maintain good works as the fruits of faith and evidences of their justification, are stigmatized as methodistical, and being righteous over-much, by the self-righteous boasters of good works. But the tree is known by its fruits.

God is infinitely just, therefore he demands an infinite satisfaction from his rebellious creatures. His law is holy, and demands a sinless obedience to all its requirements. What we esteem a small breach of the commandments, is punishable with eternal death- "Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

Can a finite creature give an infinite satisfaction? Can a being conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, with a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, keep the law of God whole and undefiled? It is impossible. The attempt is vain. Let a person try for one day to keep the entire law of God, reaching as it does to the thoughts, purposes, desires, and affections of the heart, without the least possible deviation from its demands, and he will, in one hour be led to cry out, if sincere, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Man has devised many ways to escape the way of God's appointment; but after all his labors, he remains a guilty sinner still. Penances cannot remove guilt, neither can the Purgatorial fire, that unscriptural ordeal of the Romish church, purge it away. Superstition may use its whips and scourges, its rough-haired garments and frequent fastings, to mortify the body and propitiate heaven, but all in vain -the old Adam gathers strength by the very means employed to subdue the inbred evil. All prove, at last, to be no better than a spider's web, a refuge of lies.

O blessed Redeemer, preserve me from the fatal leaven of self-righteousness; from the wily crafts of Satan. Lead me to a saving knowledge of myself. Teach me the good and the right way to the mercy-seat. You are the way. Oh! may I daily walk with you by faith; holding sweet communion with you, and deriving all my strength from your fullness. While renouncing every work which would dare to join itself with you, in my acceptance with the Father, may I be ever zealous of good works, thus proving myself to be among that little flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. Save me from Romish errors, from every anti-christian doctrine which would raise man and depress you. Oh! make me faithful in maintaining the truth, and fearless in boldly confessing you before men.

Almighty God, in his infinite wisdom, has devised a plan which his love and power have executed, and which, through his grace, he has revealed to us in the gospel of his Son. By an act of inconceivable mercy, he has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Jesus being made under the law, became our righteousness, by fulfilling in our nature all its requirements, and by suffering in our stead all its penalties. The moment, therefore, that we truly believe, and receive him into our hearts by faith, we are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. All that the law can do, is to convince and to condemn. It is the gospel alone which enlightens and saves the soul.

Precious faith, the inestimable gift of God, is what we need. This grace, by uniting us to Christ, puts us in possession of all his merits, makes us interested in his salvation, and opens a direct way of access to

God, who views us in his Son, as his adopted children. Oh! what a blessed revelation of mercy and grace! No wonder, if Satan strive to hide it from our view. Happy are they who, tasting the sweetness of this redemption, can sing with David- "This God is our God forever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death."

As 'justification by faith alone' strikes at the root of human pride, it is no marvel if the proud sinner, as well as Satan, rise against it. It requires no small degree of humility to renounce all creature dependence, all our fancied excellence, and to trust solely in the finished work of Jesus for acceptance with God. This blessed state of heart is the work of the Holy Spirit. He can so take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us; he can so guide us into all truth, as to make us delight in every thing which we naturally dislike; that is, an entire renunciation of our own supposed goodness, and an entire reception of Christ and his righteousness.

When this glorious work is wrought in our souls, then we become the very members of Christ's mystical body; we pass from death unto life, we are made the heirs of eternal glory. Oh! transporting privilege! the heirs of perdition to be made heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ! Truly this is the rest, and this is the refreshing. How delightful are the words of Paul; "We which have believed do enter into rest." Yes! even now, in this tumultuous world, we enter into rest. We rest in the love of God; we rest on the bosom of our Redeemer; we rest in the promises of his grace, and thus coming to him, and relying upon him, we find rest unto our souls. Christ is the only resting-place for the weary soul. "There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked." But, "in me," says Christ to his people, "you shall have peace."

The carnal heart naturally hates this revelation of grace, and the character which it produces. Religion in its present form is so uncongenial to the natural man, that it requires not the aid of moroseness or austerity to render it unpalatable. Though it come to him clothed with humility, with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and smiling with benignity and love, yet he turns with aversion from this lovely object. Thus it was when He, who was the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely, came unto his own; his own received him not; they saw no beauty in him, nothing that they should desire him.

If the natural heart dislikes the religion of Jesus, how careful should real Christians be, lest by a lack of the due exhibition of Christian graces, they should prejudice the ungodly against Christianity itself. True religion is lovely in its native character. We disfigure it too often by unchristian tempers, and thus impede its influence in the circle in which we move. Bad temper, like an impure dross, sullies the crystal cup of domestic comfort. What contradictions we often hear- "He is an excellent Christian, and would be quite a pattern, if it were not for his temper, which often carries him beyond the bounds of moderation!" Nothing is more common than such an observation among professors of religion! He is a good man- but this spoils all.

Oh! did we live a life of faith in the Son of God, we would live in the daily cultivation of heavenly tempers. Our study and aim would be to tread in the steps of the meek and lowly Savior; to drink deep into his spirit; and by a life enhancing godliness, to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Knowing from where these blessings flow we should "wait on the Lord." How expressive is the Hebrew word for wait. "It implies the extension of a right line from one point to another. The first point is the human heart, the line is its intense desire, and the last point is God, to whom the heart extends this straight line of earnest desire. He who, while he waits on God, keeps his way, is sure to have the further blessings of which he is in pursuit."

Oh! that my wandering heart may thus be led to proceed in one unbroken line of holy, heavenly desires, towards my God and Savior. Blessed Jesus! the work must be yours. You, you alone can bind my runaway affections to Yourself. You, who are the Life, O quicken me to live a life of faith in you. Perform your work of love in me, and then, through all eternity, my work of praise will never cease.

How precious is a life of faith,  
In Jesus' never-failing word;  
To credit all the Savior says,  
To trust the promise of the Lord.  
It gives a calm, a sweet repose,  
Which gilds the varying scenes of life;  
A peace, the true believer knows,  
While passing through this world of strife.  
His mind is kept in perfect peace,  
When stayed upon his faithful God;  
While terrors on the sinner seize,  
Beneath Jehovah's vengeful rod.  
When judgments, like the thunders roll,  
And nations quake through guilt and fear;  
When earth is shook from pole to pole,  
Believers feel their Savior near.  
They walk with Jesus, and are blessed;  
They walk in love, and can rejoice;  
They walk to their celestial rest,  
Their souls' delightful, happy choice.  
Along this consecrated way,  
Which all the saints of old have trod,  
I hasten to the eternal day,  
To you, my Savior, and my God.

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