

Living By Faith (Galatians 2:20)

1. Faith is the key to victory in the Christian life (1 John 5:4-5; Gal. 2:20). I received Christ as my Saviour by faith (John 1:12) and in the same way I am to walk and live the Christian life (Col. 2:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 3:1-3). It is not by fleshly trying or struggling, but it is by faith. It is not *my* working (Heb. 4:10), but it is *God working in me* (Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:21). It is for me to actively and whole-heartedly trust in Him to do His great working in and through me.
2. I was saved from the *penalty* of sin by believing that CHRIST DIED FOR ME and rose again (1 Cor. 15:1-4). I rested in *His* finished work (John 19:30; Rom. 4:5). I can be saved from the *power* of sin by believing that I DIED WITH CHRIST (Rom. 6:6; 6:3; Col. 2:20; Gal. 2:20) and that He is my LIFE (Col. 3:1-4; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21; Rom. 6:11; 1 Cor. 15:22). As a saved person I must rest upon *His* finished work (Heb. 4:9-11). The great truth of SUBSTITUTION is that *Christ died for me*. To be justified I must believe this truth. The great truth of IDENTIFICATION is that *I died with Christ*. To grow in holiness and Christ-likeness (sanctification) I must believe this truth.
3. Faith must fix itself on the facts of God's Word. First the believer must **KNOW** the facts concerning his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3--"Know ye not"; Rom. 6:6--"knowing this"). Secondly the believer must **RECKON** on those facts and count on them as being true (Rom. 6:11--"reckon" is a faith word; it means that the believer calculates that what God has said is true and counts on it). Faith rests upon God's facts, which in this case involve the believer's identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.
4. There is a difference between my POSITION IN CHRIST (my standing in Him) and my actual CONDITION (my actual state in time). My position in Christ is perfect, complete and eternal (Col. 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:1) because I stand complete in a perfect Saviour (1 Cor. 1:30) and God sees me IN HIM (Eph. 1:6; 2 Cor. 5:21). My condition is what I actually am in my daily walk. I learn from Romans 6:6 that *MY OLD MAN WAS CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST*. This is a fact. God said it and it is true of my position in Christ. In actual experience my old man is often alive and well. The goal of the Christian life is to have one's condition line up with one's position. This is the work of the Spirit of God (2 Cor. 3:18), but I must do my part. The more I reckon upon the facts of Romans 6:6; 6:11; Gal. 2:20; etc., the more it will become a reality in my actual experience. It is faith in the facts of my position that gives me the daily benefits of growth in my condition. Most believers operate based upon feelings as they focus upon their failing condition. We need to focus upon our perfect position in Christ, seeing ourselves as God sees us in *His beloved Son*.
5. To be saved from sin's penalty I had to see myself as God sees me--as a guilty, lost, hopeless, hell-deserving sinner (Rom. 3:10-23; etc.). God and God alone must do the saving based on the finished work of Christ. Likewise, to be saved from sin's dominion and power I must see myself as God sees me--positioned in His Son and identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and seated with Him in heavenly places (Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:1-4). Thus my focus is not upon *myself* and my struggling, failing condition, but *my focus is upon Christ*—His glory, His finished work, His perfect redemption, my new life in Him (2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17). By faith I reckon upon and appropriate my position in Him, and by God's working the Holy Spirit will be transforming my actual condition into His image from one stage of glory [Christ-likeness] to the next (2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Pet. 3:18).
6. More and more as a growing believer I will search the Scriptures and see the riches that I possess in Christ (Eph. 1:3; 2 Cor. 8:9) and by faith I will claim and appropriate these riches. [See our paper "215 THINGS THAT ARE TRUE OF ME NOW THAT I AM SAVED"] I will possess my possessions! I will reckon myself to be a spiritual billionaire by God's grace! Seeing myself in light of the facts of God's Word, I then by faith seek to *be what I already am!* I am a child of light (Eph. 5:8). So I am to walk (Eph. 5:8). In Christ I am a SAINT (1 Cor. 1:2). So I am to live saintly (Eph. 4:1; 1 Thess. 4:1-7).
7. Just as John 3:16 concisely sums up the gospel, so Galatians 2:20 concisely sums up the Christian life. Note the following about this passage: 1) *FAITH* is the key; 2) The basis for Christian living is the finished work of Christ; 3) The emphasis is upon *identification*: I was crucified with Christ and now He lives His life in me; 4) The facts of this verse are true for *every believer* but only those believers who claim these facts by faith benefit in their daily walk. Sadly many believers live as if these facts are not true; 5) Galatians 2:20 is explained further on the opposite page.