

Columbus Street church of Christ

Sunday Bulletin

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Faith: The Open Door to God's Wisdom, Power, Presence and Salvation

If I could fathom terms like “infinite, endless, limitless or boundless” I might be able to explain my faith. O’ how many times I have read and meditated on, “*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Heb. 11:1). Faith is “infinite” because our Creator is infinite in wisdom, power, and presence. When you take time and investigate Hebrews 11 verse 1, you will begin to understand the immense and unlimited force behind these deceptively simple 14 words. For example, “*Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen*” (ASV), a better rendering I believe because of the word used “*conviction*” – Greek: ἔλεγχος, which Thayer's Greek Lexicon defined simply as “1. a proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested: 2. Conviction.” Used only here and in 2 Timothy 3:16 “*...and is profitable for doctrine, for **reproof**...*”. The key difference: [reproof: an expression of blame or disapproval] and [correction: the action or process of correcting, setting things right]. Profitability comes by a progression of thought: Begins with teaching, “*doctrine*”; then clear disapproval for error, “*reproof*”, then “*correction*”, the way out of error and finally, a life-long journey, “*instruction in righteousness*”, learning to live by what is right in the sight of God, not man. God’s word, the only source for faith and truth (Rom. 10:17; John 17:17), is useful for teaching, pointing out error, correcting and training souls to live lives approved by God.

The gospel reveals truth and all spiritual things (2 Pet. 1:3-4; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17) and leads to faith and salvation; “*but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name*” (John 20:31). Paul so declares, “*And without controversy great is the ^[a]mystery of godliness: God^[b] was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory*” (1Tim. 3:16). One great text out of thousands, that maybe, we have not come to fully appreciate and rely on as we should. “*without controversy*”, no argument, no question concerning its greatness, and this should create a keen interest in the “*mystery*” to learn what is being revealed.

The great “*mystery of godliness*” is the revelation of the truth regarding God’s eternal provisions through Jesus Christ for man’s salvation. “*Mystery*” a reference to the unknown or unrevealed not the unlearnable. Revealed is to be understood or seen, not mysterious. Paul explains reading the gospel brings understanding (Eph. 3:3-12). Not known in ages past “*...it*

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (v.5). This, according to the apostle, is accomplished through Jesus Christ in whom we have “boldness and confidence by faith” (v.12). The “mystery” is about Christ and the church (Eph. 5:32) Revealed for the obedience of faith (Rom. 1:5; 16:26).

“*Godliness*” is explained by W.E. Vine: “...as embodied in, and communicated through, the truth of the faith concerning Christ”. One must absorb truth and put it into practice. What truth is revealed? Evidence upon which assurance may be established with firm confidence – not imaginative, not wishful dreamy feelings or some sort of a mystic vision but firm evidence.

Of Christ: (1) “*God was manifest in the flesh*”. John so declares, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*” (John 1:1, 14). Jesus is the Divine Son of God sent for the redemption of all men (Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 5:8). (2) “*Justified in the Spirit.*” Jesus was conceived of the Spirit (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35). He had the Spirit without measure (John 3:34). The Spirit was a sign to John by which to identify Jesus (John 1:32-34; Matt. 3:16) and confirmed that He is the Son of God (Rom. 1:4). (3) “*Seen of Angels.*” The angels announced His birth (Luke 2:9-11), ministered to Him after His temptations (Matt. 4:11) and came and strengthened Him (Luke 22:43) watched over the tomb (Matt. 28:1-8) and proclaimed His resurrection (Luke 24:5-6). Christ is risen! He is alive! (4) “*Believed on in the world*” Jesus Christ accepted, though by few, to be the Divine Son of God, the essential truth for man’s salvation for without that faith, a person cannot come to God (Heb. 11:1; Mk. 16:15-16; John 1:12; 5:39-47; 8:24; 14:1-7; Matt. 7:24-27). “*Believed on in the world*” is one great fact of the “mystery” because it is a proof that Jesus was accepted as the Son of God by those with whom He lived as John so firmly declared (1 John 1:1-7).

The inspired Word is given to produce faith and lead one to accept Jesus as both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:37-42; 8:37-38; Mk. 16:15-16; Heb. 3:12; 10:38-39; James 1:25; 2:17, 20, 24). It is faith which worketh by love that brings salvation (Gal. 5:6; 1 John 2:22-25; 5:4-5, 9-13). Truly it is amazing that Jesus was believed on in the world in spite of the forces of all false, human reasoning. The inspired Word of God reveals the only firm, proven reasons upon which faith in a divine Savior can be substantiated. It was a “*great mystery*” while kept secret, but now being revealed, it is understandable, sufficient and the power of God to produce saving faith which moves one to accept Jesus (Phil. 3:8-11; Gal. 2:20). This is God’s grace provided to give man the only way of salvation (Tit. 2:11-12). What a wonderful revelation. They believed and obeyed. We should follow their example. The message is trustworthy (2 Cor. 4:13).

“Received up into glory.” This points to Christ’s ascension back to the Father (John 17:5; Acts 1:9). As Paul declared, “When he ascended upon high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men” (Eph. 4:8).



“By faith we understand that the ^[e]worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”

Thus, Christ took His seat at God’s right hand with all authority in both heaven and earth (Acts 2:36; Eph.

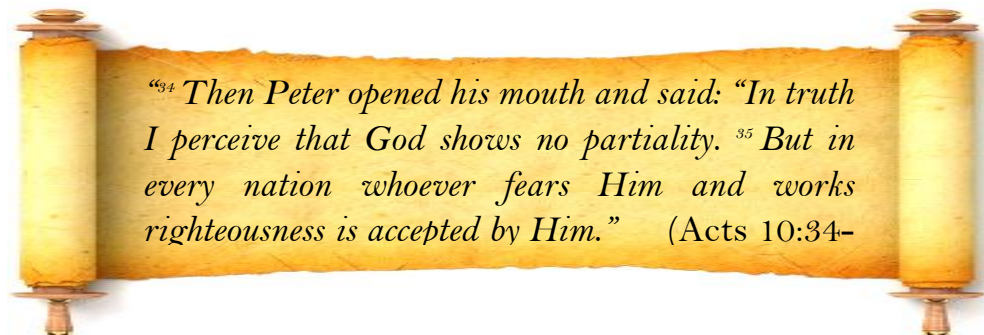
1:18-23). The gospel of Christ is God’s power unto salvation to all who believe (Rom. 1:16-18). ³³ *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!* ³⁴ *“For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?”* ³⁵ *“Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?”* ³⁶ *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen”* (Rom. 11:33-36).

Herein lies the substance, assurance, and conviction upon which faith is produced and sustained. Will you believe and drink these precious truths into your heart and life? After Jesus prepared the way, the Holy Spirit revealed it in an understandable manner to make it available and attainable to all men (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:16-18). Paul wrote, ¹ *Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,* ² *by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.* ³ *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,* ⁴ *and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,* ⁵ *and that He was seen by ^[a]Cephas, then by the twelve.* ⁶ *After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have ^[b]fallen asleep”* (1 Cor. 15:1-6). Will you hear the witnesses? Will you believe and obey it to the saving of your soul? God has provided it—will you accept it?

The answer lies within your own reach. Your soul’s eternal destiny will depend upon your answer. ¹¹ *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,* ¹² *teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age”* (Titus 2:11-12). It was Jesus, “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works” (Titus 2:14).

In Love

David Scarpino



Welcome One and All!

Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). ***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*** (Isaiah 6:3)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 PM

What Jesus Said I Must Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel ----- John 6:45
2. Believe the gospel----- John 8:24
3. Repent of sins ----- Luke 13:3
4. Confess Christ----- Matthew 10:32
5. Be baptized ----- Mark 16:16
6. Remain faithful until death----- Matthew 10:22