

Faithfulness

We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance [patience] and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions [tribulations] which you endure. (II Thessalonians 1:3-4)

We are saved by the grace of God through faith, and faith itself is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 12:3; II Thessalonian 2:13-14). We can be assured of our salvation and eternal life because God is faithful—we can count on Him and His word (I Corinthians 1:9; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; Titus 3:4-7).

The righteousness of God was demonstrated through the faith, or faithfulness, of Christ (Romans 3:21-22; Philippians 3:7-11). We were also justified by the faith of Christ (Galatians 2:16). Therefore, we should live by the faith of Christ—we should demonstrate His faithfulness as we walk in Him (Galatians 2:20). I believe that *the faith of Christ* in these referenced verses in the KJV is the correct rendering, rather than *faith in Christ* found in other Bible versions. The context of these verses does not depend on our faith that is often variable, weak, and tainted by sin—we are justified and made righteous because Christ was faithful (obedient) to God by not sinning and by dying for our sins. This is the faith in which we are to stand (Colossians 1:21-23). Our faith in God and in Christ is expressed through *believing* what Christ accomplished for us at the cross and *walking* worthy of our salvation.

It is important to God that our faith is exhibited or manifested by working through love (Galatians 5:5-6; Ephesians 1:15; II Thessalonians 1:3-4). Additionally, our faith should be sincere—from a pure heart through love instead of fake or self-serving (I Timothy 1:5). Our faith and faithfulness should be demonstrated, among other things, by:

- Standing firm in the faith (I Corinthians 16:13-14; Colossians 2:4-7); that is, being unwavering in the truth of God and not following or succumbing to false doctrine (Ephesians 4:14-16; I Timothy 6:11-12; II Timothy 4:2-4; Galatians 1:6-9);
- Being devoted or committed in our service to God, pleasing to Him (I Timothy 6:20-21; II Corinthians 5:6-9);
- Being truthful and trustworthy (Ephesians 4:25; I Corinthians 4:1-2); and
- Being dependable or reliable (Colossians 4:7-9).

And although you were formerly alienated [separated from God as nonbelievers] and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He [God] has now reconciled you in His [Christ's] fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him [God] holy and blameless and beyond reproach—if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast [grounded and settled], and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. (Colossians 1:21-23)

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (I Corinthians 15:58)