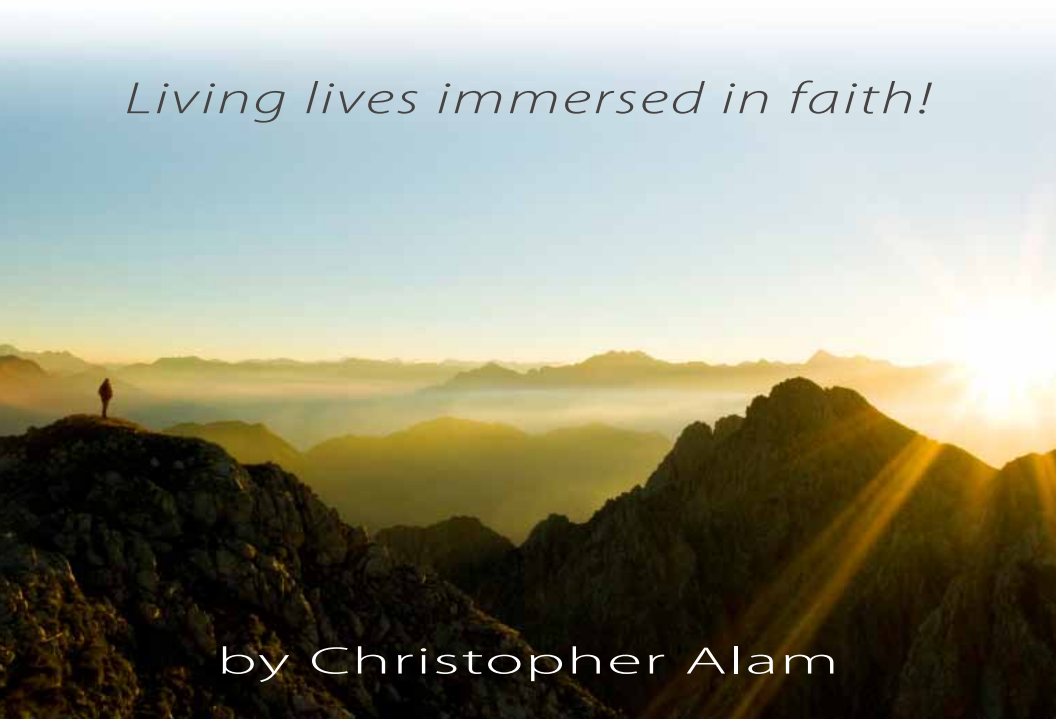


Faith that

# Flows

from Grace

*Living lives immersed in faith!*



by Christopher Alam

God has decreed in His Word, *“Now the just shall live by faith...”* (Hebrews 10:38).

This exhortation tells us that we, who belong to Jesus, should not merely act in faith when the need for faith arises, but that we should live our lives immersed in faith. Living a life of Faith is one of the very foundations of the Christian life.

To live by faith would therefore mean breathing faith, thinking faith, speaking faith, acting faith, walking faith, and so on - literally every aspect of our lives being based and grounded in the spirit of Faith.

Our faith rests upon and flows from that which the Lord Jesus did for us upon the Cross of Calvary, and upon the Written Word of God. The Bible declares:

*“Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.”*

Isaiah 53:4-5 NRSV

In other words, upon the Cross the Lord Jesus

bore upon Himself our sins, our diseases, and the curses that were upon our lives so that we may be righteous, healed, free, and blessed.

This is what faith is for, to enable us to appropriate these and every other blessing that Christ has purchased for us with His own blood, so that they no longer remain as theological truths and phrases printed on paper but as living and dynamic truths in our earthly lives. By faith we can take possession of the things which Jesus has purchased for us at the Cross.

I have noticed through my years in ministry that people carry one of two different perceptions of faith. In other words, there are two different ways in which faith is taught, preached and practiced. Both of these perceptions of faith are deceptively similar in many ways, but they are, in reality, very different from each other. Only one of them is right.

One of these is what I would call "legalistic" faith or "law-based" faith. This is when the believer believes that he can possess God's blessings only by exercising what he calls the "laws of faith". The whole idea is that of God being in a passive state who stands at the

sidelines watching us as we go through the motions and spiritual gymnastics of faith. Once he is impressed that we have gone through all the motions of faith, he would then see to it that the miracle that we have asked him for happens.

In this “law-based faith”, the believer believes that the main factor which ultimately produces miracles in his life is his own ability to believe, to confess, to hold fast to his confession, etc.

Although confession and these things are Biblical principles, his faith leans more upon his own going through the motions of faith than it does upon Jesus. HE is the active one, whilst God is passive. The “burden” unfortunately is on him, and not on Jesus. The results appear to depend more upon him and his ability to pray, believe, and confess, rather than upon the love and mercy of our Lord Jesus.

In this “philosophy of faith”, what appears to be “faith” is actually nothing but “works”.

The other approach is true Biblical faith. This is what I like to call “Grace-based faith”. Grace and works are opposites of each other. We live either by Grace or by works. Many Christians try to make a convenient “mix” of the two, which

NEVER works, because the two just cannot mix. It is either one or the other.

After all, the Bible does say, *“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).

Works-based faith may give some limited results because God’s Word, even spoken or exercised under a legalistic mind-set is still God’s Word. But on the whole this kind of faith usually brings only disappointment and failure. Now let us understand what Grace-based faith is. Before doing so let us take a look at Strong’s definition of “Grace” or what the Bible means when it says that we are “under Grace”. The word “Grace” is the Greek word “Charis” which means the following:

*“God’s unmerited favor. The merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues. The spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace.”*

Wow!

In other words, true Grace is the power of God's Holy influence working in the hearts of people and drawing them close to Jesus. Grace, as many people erroneously assume, is NOT a passive attitude of spiritual laziness, complacency, or neglect of God and His Word. Grace is NOT a license for sin. Grace is the power of God working in man. When a person stands under God's Grace it brings forth life, freedom, victory, holiness, healing, peace, and prosperity.

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."* Ephesians 2:8

Two things stand out in this verse:

1. Grace *precedes* faith. In other words, Grace comes before faith. This leads us to something that most people have never realized - that we cannot truly understand faith without first understanding Grace, because Grace *always precedes* faith. Grace is the bedrock upon which faith rests. To truly understand faith, we must first understand the Love and the Grace of God.
2. Faith is *"not of ourselves."* In other words, faith too like Grace, is a gift of God. It is through Grace that God gives us the faith to appropriate all

the blessings that Grace provides!

An easy way to understand this is through this allegory: God shows me a house that He owns and says, "I am selling you this wonderful house, but it will cost you XXX amount of money, which is far more than you could ever afford!" He then proceeds to give me the money so that I can use it to buy the house from Him. I may say that "I bought the house", but did I really? It was, after all, He who gave me the money to appropriate it from Him!

Grace could also be described as the pipeline through which God freely and undeservedly pours down all His blessings to us. Faith is the pipeline that God through His Grace freely puts into our hearts. The purpose of this pipeline is to connect to the pipeline of His Grace. When we align and connect our pipeline of faith to God's pipeline of Grace, God's miracles begin to flow.

Grace is unmerited favor given to us just because of Jesus. Even faith, which follows Grace, is given to us by God as an act of God's Grace. Do you know how He does this? *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17).

Notice that faith is not “produced” by us “working the Word”! On the contrary, faith “comes” as yet another gift of God’s Grace! This is how it works: as we live in God’s Word and immerse ourselves in it, we meet Jesus (Who Himself is the Living Word) in His Written Word and see what He has done for us. God, by this act of His Grace, deposits faith in our hearts so that we can, by that same faith, lay hold of and appropriate the very things that we have seen in His Word.

**This wonderful interaction of the Word, Grace, and Faith is pivotal to our Christian life.** Paul said, *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32).

The Word of God is the “Word of God’s Grace”, also known as “the Word of Faith”. Grace working through God’s Word not only brings us faith, but also builds us up and brings us into the fullness of our inheritance in Christ.

Another wonderful thing about Grace is that it is for EVERYBODY! Nobody is left out, and then once we receive Grace, we receive faith too!

*“And of his fulness have all we received, and grace*

*for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* John 1:16-17

Grace also gives us “righteousness”, which does *not* mean fleshly perfection as some assume it does. Righteousness means “right standing” with God. This means that God accepts us and loves us just as we are. He looks at us in Jesus, as if we never sinned or failed in our lives. This in practical terms means that our own failures and imperfections are of no consequence when we are in Christ Jesus and walk with Him. God sees us just as He sees Jesus! Because of this we can walk with a clean conscience without guilt, and our faith is always powerful and always brings miraculous results. The Bible says:

*“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”* Romans 5:17

When we live under Grace, faith and righteousness are not an issue because they are ours, given to us freely by our Lord. The problem is that man’s natural tendency is to turn to legalism. There is something about the natural man that, although he recognizes that

he is saved by Grace, he feels he has to turn to legalism for Christian life and conduct. This is religion and not freedom in Christ. The Bible says:

*“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage... Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”*  
Galatians 5:1, 4

Religion and legalism are more dangerous than we realize because they can actually put us in bondage and cause us to fall from Grace! That is why we have to fight the fight of faith - to fight against the tendencies of our flesh to go into the works of the law. We should fight to stay in Grace and in faith where we know that God's favor abounds to people like us, not because we deserve anything, but we are blessed with all things only because of Jesus, and Jesus alone!

Lastly, True Grace makes us holy. I say “True Grace” because the concept of Grace has been so misinterpreted and misunderstood by some, that there are those who have come to believe that God's Grace is a license to neglect godliness and even to indulge in the lusts of

the flesh. *True Grace is NOT lawlessness!*

*A man truly living under God's Grace develops a mind-set that says, "God loves me so much, He has given me so much more than I could ever deserve in this life; therefore, I will never allow anything into my live that would cloud my communion with Him!"*

Grace, Faith, Righteousness bearing rich fruit in our lives and in our ministries. This is true and wonderful living indeed!

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