

- *"This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished **from start to finish by faith**. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life." (Romans 1:17, NLT)*
 - In the world of trapeze performance, there are "flyers" and there are "catchers." Imagine yourself a trapeze flyer sailing through the air, flipping as you go. Then at the end of your rotation, as you hang in mid-air, you see the catcher. Your natural impulse is to reach out and grab for him. That's certainly what I would do. I'd grab anything I could -- his hands, his arms, his shirt, his hair. It wouldn't matter. I'm grabbing a hold of something, anything, and hanging on to it for dear life! // But the flyer is trained to resist this impulse. He understands that it is preemptive for him to attempt to catch the catcher. Any such attempt would actually prevent the catcher from performing his task. In the world of high wire acrobatics, this principle has been reduced to a well-known axiom, attributed to Rodleigh of The Flying Rodleighs, which says, "The flyer is the one who lets go and the catcher is the one who catches. The flyer must never try to catch the catcher!"
- APPLICATION** One of the great lessons of the spiritual life is to learn not to strive when God has called you to rest, or rest when God has called you to strive. The most important place of rest and trust is in the promise of salvation. The Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). In other words, don't try to catch God, let God catch you! // When it comes to the salvation of your soul, you are the one who must let go and trust God to catch you. Those who insist on catching God will only prevent Him from doing what He has promised to do. It isn't your job to finish the work of Christ, but to rest in the finished work of Christ. This means you must cease from striving to earn your salvation and put your trust in God's promise to save you. As Jesus declared, "It is finished!" So, let the Catcher catch you! Henri Nouwen, *Sabbatical Journeys*.
- My goal is to show you what you have when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. When you believe you are saved! When you believe you live! When you believe it changes how you live. The one thing in common to all three of those statements is FAITH.

I. **From Start to Finish By Faith** Rom 1:17 NLT

- A. Paul states, The Good News is this: God makes us right in His sight by faith...from start to finish by faith. As a believer, here I what I must understand: I am saved by faith, walk by faith, pray in faith, defended by the shield of faith, and live by faith! Therefore, I need to know what faith is.
1. Another way of translating Ro 1:17 would be "*by faith and nothing but faith can put us into a right relationship with God.*" Therefore having faith is huge for the Christian! Faith accesses all that God provides. As soon as we know what God provides we can believe for these things.
 2. God demands that we be righteous and this can only happen through what He has provided in Christ. And what He has provided in Christ can only be obtained

through faith! So it makes sense we think about the answer to the question, What is faith.

B. What is faith? Heb 11:1

1. *"Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see."* (Hebrews 11:1, NLT)
2. *"NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses]."* (Hebrews 11:1, AMP)
3. Heb 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God.
 - a) If God demands I have faith and it is impossible for me to have faith then I can challenge His justice. But if He gives me the means whereby I can produce faith then the responsibility rest on me. He does this by His Word! The Word lets me know what to trust Him for! Romans 10:17 "Faith comes by hearing the message and the message through the Word of God." Job treasured God's word, *"I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food."* (Job 23:12, NLT) Dt 8:3 *Man cant live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Ill. Mt 8:11 Centurion pleased Jesus. Mt 15:26 Canaanite woman pleased Jesus.*
 - b) Faith in God is faith in His Word. It is faith in who He is. You simply trust Him. You trust His Word as sure!
 - c) Faith is the 'good soil' of Mark 4:20. Good soil are those who: Hear the Word, Accept the Word, Produce because of the Word. Centurion Mt 8:11.
4. Faith takes what is unseen and brings it into reality. Rom 4. Abraham called those things that were not as though they were. Romans 4:17. Hope is future, **faith is** now! Faith is trusting. Faith is resting. Faith is obtaining.

II. Saved By Grace Through Faith

- A. *"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."* (Ephesians 2:8-9, NLT)
- B. What am I being saved from? Saved is the Greek word, Sozo. If I am saved then something must have been out to kill me. John 10:10 Thief. If I am being saved then something must be after me to kill me, destroy me, cause me to die...spirit soul and body.
 1. Saved from my sin. Saved from the wrath of God. Saved from destruction.
 2. My sin is what has me bound for the road to destruction.
 - a) Wages of sin is death. Ro 3:23
 - b) Separation eternally from God.
 - c) Luke 16, rich man and Lazarus.

3. We are saved by what we do not deserve and by what we have not earned! Making me totally dependent upon what God has done for me... therefore I must trust him (faith.) He has provided my salvation therefore I must trust Him if I want to be saved from my sin, my destruction, my punishment.
- C. *"So they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."* (Acts 16:31, NKJV) This was Paul's answer, when asked by the jailer, what must we do to be saved? BELIEVE! No hail Mary's, no our fathers, no clean up my act first...Believe! Then you will be saved. Trust now, keep believing this afternoon, trust in Christ alone tomorrow and everyday after this.
- D. I am save by grace through faith. It is the only way to access what God provides.

III. The Just Shall Live by Faith

- A. *"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* (Romans 1:17, NKJV)
- B. *"So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, It is through faith that a righteous person has life."* (Galatians 3:11, NLT) Life in Gr. is Zoe - vitality of life! Spirit, soul, and body.
- C. Testimonies:
 1. Martin Luther read Romans 1:16-17. He believed and was born again!
 2. John Wesley heard Romans 1:17 being read and was born again!
 3. I believed! When I did, I was born again! Saved from my sin, rescued from God's wrath, and eternal separation from God. And made alive in Christ!
 4. The testimony becomes: I was dead! But now I know that I am alive! John 10:10 life abundantly. You know when eternal life enters you! Another way of saying this is: When you have been saved you start living! Living is the result of being saved. You are saved by grace through faith! And by faith you are made righteous and live!
- D. *"Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God."* (Habakkuk 2:4, NLT)
 1. The proud do their own thing!
 2. The proud suppress the truth. Romans 1:18-ff.
 - a) They create God in their own image.
 - b) They create gods with their own hands and bow to what they have created.
 3. The righteous live by faith in God. They trust Him. Just like Abraham did.

IV. I Live In The Flesh by Faith

- A. The life I live in this body I live by faith. *"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20, NLT)
1. Old self died therefore a new way of living is required. *"We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin."* (Romans 6:6, NLT)
 2. Eph 4:17-24 Put off the old man that you were because he is dead. The new man (who has been saved) lives!...and he lives differently. I do this by faith!
 3. Col 3:9-11...since you have put off the old man put on the new!...
 4. This not about the pressure of performance it is about living like a man alive and not one that is dead.
- B. *"So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For **we live by believing and not by seeing**."* (2 Cor 5:6-7, NLT) We walk by faith and not by sight!
- C. The sum of Romans 6-8 is simply this. You now have the life of God in you all things are possible for those who believe. Believe me! God is alive in you. 21 times Holy Spirit is used in Romans 8.
1. Fall leaves - dying never looked so beautiful as it does to the believer.
 - a) Dead leaves on a dead branch do not fall off.
 - b) Because the tree has life in it, it forces the old leaves off. It know and sees the vision for the spring there it must push the old leaves off to make room for new growth.

Conclusion:

- The flyer must never try to catch the catcher! One of the great lessons of the spiritual life is to learn not to strive when God has called you to rest. The Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). In other words, don't try to catch God, let God catch you! // When it comes to the salvation of your soul, you are the one who must let go and trust God to catch you. Those who insist on catching God will only prevent Him from doing what He has promised to do. It isn't your job to finish the work of Christ, but to rest in the finished work of Christ.