



**THE FAITH OF CHRIST AND OUR FAITH IN CHRIST**

*“That the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”* — The promise of life is the promise of eternal life and salvation, of everlasting righteousness and the never ending smile of divine approval. All included in the promise belongs to all who believe.

**It is not our believing** that fulfilled God’s covenant promise and brought in that blessed righteousness by which we now stand before him in life. The promise is given to all who believe. But **the promise was fulfilled and comes to us “by faith of Jesus Christ.”** It was Christ to whom the promise was made as our Surety in the everlasting covenant, upon condition of his obedience unto death as our Substitute. And it is Christ who obtained the promise by his faithful fulfillment of his covenant engagements as our Surety (Hebrews 10:5-14).

**Verse 23** — *“But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”* — What faith is Paul talking about here? **Whose faith is this?** Is it yours? Is it mine? The faith that came by which we were delivered from the curse of God’s holy law, by which we were justified, is *“the faith of Jesus Christ”* spoken of in verse 22.

**It is this, “the faith of Jesus Christ,” that is revealed to us by the gospel.** We are shut up to Christ, the faith that is now revealed in the gospel. Our faith in Christ is not revealed to us, it is given to us and worked in us by the mighty operations of God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:19-20; 2:8-9; Colossians 1:12). It is Christ (*“the faith of Christ”*) who is revealed.

**When God the Holy Spirit comes to chosen, redeemed sinners in the saving power of his omnipotent grace, he convinces them of all that Christ accomplished by his faithful obedience as our Substitute.** When he reveals Christ in a person he convinces him that his sin has been put away by Christ’s atonement, that righteousness has been brought in by Christ’s obedience, and that justice has been satisfied by Christ’s blood (John 16:8-11). And the sinner, being convinced of these things, trusts Christ. **Now read verse 24.** —

**Verse 24** — *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”* — Be sure to note that our translators put the words *“to bring us”* in italicized letters to call our

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attention to the fact that these words were added by them to make the sentence read more smoothly and that there are no corresponding words in the original language of the text. **So verse 24 should really read,** — “*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto (or until) Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*”

It was the law’s purpose, like a schoolmaster, to direct God’s elect to Christ and make sure they get to Christ. The law was our schoolmaster until Christ came and fulfilled it by his faithful obedience to it and satisfaction of it. Once that was done the schoolmaster’s service ended (Romans 10:4).

Now that the righteousness of the law has been fulfilled by Christ’s obedience in life as our Representative and the justice of the law has been fulfilled by Christ’s satisfaction in his death (Romans 4:25), we can be and are “*justified by faith.*” **Because justification has been accomplished by Christ in the court of heaven we can now be justified in the court of our own consciences by faith in Christ.**

**Faith looks away from self to Christ,** and looking to Christ, we see our justification fully accomplished in him and are justified by him. **Trusting Christ, we receive complete, final, full justification in him and have peace with God in him “by whom we have now received the atonement”** (Romans 4:25-5:12, 18).

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(Romans 5:1-12) “Therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall

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be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (12) Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

(Romans 5:18) “Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.”

**Verse 25** — “*But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*” — Since faith has come, that is to say, since Christ has come, we are no longer under the law.

**Verse 26** — “*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*” — Obviously, just as it is in the case of justification, our faith in Christ does not cause God to adopt us as his children. That was done in eternal election (Ephesians 1:3-6). Rather, our faith in Christ is the fruit and evidence of our adoption (Galatians 4:6-7) just as it is the fruit and evidence of our justification.

(Galatians 4:4-7) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

**Our faith in Christ is the assurance of our adoption as the children of God.** Believing on the Son of God, we stand before God with the confident assurance that we are justified, accepted in Christ, the children of God, “*heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.*”

**“THE FAITH OF CHRIST”**

The Scriptures declare that we are “*justified by faith of Jesus Christ.*” **That means that our justification was totally accomplished by Christ, that it**

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**was accomplished outside our experience, altogether without us, by the faith (faithful obedience) of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Substitute.**

Paul uses this phrase, “*the faith of Christ*,” **SEVEN TIMES** in his writings (Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16, 20; 3:22; Ephesians 3:12; Philippians 3:9). **Every time he speaks of justification accomplished for us, this is the phrase he uses.** Let me show you.

(Romans 3:22) “Even the righteousness of God *which is* by **faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:”

(Galatians 2:16) “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by **the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

(Galatians 2:20) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

(Galatians 3:22) “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by **faith of Jesus Christ** might be given to them that believe.”

(Ephesians 3:12) “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by **the faith of him**.”

(Philippians 3:9) “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the **faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

**We have been conditioned to think of faith only in connection with ourselves.** We believe in Christ. We trust the Son of God. “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life.*” When we read in the Book of God about “*the faith of Christ*” we automatically think, “That must just be an odd way of saying ‘faith in Christ.’”

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**CORRECT TRANSLATION**

That is exactly what the vast majority of the commentaries do with this phrase. They tell us, the words, “*faith of Christ*,” really mean “faith in Christ.” These words, “*the faith of Christ*,” are commonly treated as though they were a mistranslation of the Greek text; but they are not a mistranslation. I have checked everyone of them carefully. Our translation is correct. Yet, almost every modern English translation (You know, those “great improvements” upon the old, archaic King James Version) mistranslates this phrase and makes it read, “faith in Christ.” I do not think that the mistranslations were made accidentally!

We are told by the commentators and led by the modern translations to believe that the phrase is really just an odd way of saying “faith in Christ” and that it really refers to our faith in Christ. Such recklessness in handling the Word of God, be it deliberate or otherwise, completely alters the meaning of Holy Scripture.

**CLEAR DISTINCTION**

When Paul speaks of our faith in Christ and of the faith of Christ as distinct things, the distinction is clear and unmistakable. **When he speaks of our faith it is obvious** (Romans 3:25, 28; 4:5; Galatians 3:26; Colossians 1:4). There’s no ambiguity at all.

(Romans 3:25) “Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation **through faith in his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;”

(Romans 3:28) “Therefore we conclude that a man is **justified by faith** without the deeds of the law.”

(Romans 4:5) “But to him that worketh not, but **believeth on him** that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith** is counted for righteousness.”

(Galatians 3:26) “For ye are all the children of God **by faith in Christ Jesus**.”

(Colossians 1:4) “Since we heard of **your faith in Christ** Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints.”

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In these and the dozens of other passages like them, there is no question about whose faith Paul is referring to. He is talking about our faith. **And when he draws a distinction between our faith in Christ and the faith of Christ, the distinction is equally obvious** (Romans 3:21-22; Galatians 2:15-16; 3:22; Philippians 3:9).

(Romans 3:21-22) “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (22) Even the righteousness of God *which is* by **faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and upon all **them that believe**: for there is no difference:”

(Galatians 2:15-16) “We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, (16) Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by **the faith of Jesus Christ**, even **we have believed in Jesus Christ**, that we **might be justified by the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

(Galatians 3:22) “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise **by faith of Jesus Christ** might be **given to them that believe**.”

(Philippians 3:9) “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is **through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God **by faith**.”

**BOTH VITAL**

Paul is not simply declaring our faith in Christ twice in the same sentences, just in different ways. He is not being redundant. Not at all! **When he speaks of “the faith of Jesus Christ” he is talking about Christ’s faith. When he speaks of our faith in Christ, he is talking about our faith. Both are vital.** We could never be saved by our faith in Christ, were it not for the faith of Christ; and we can never be saved by the faith of Christ until we have faith in Christ. Yes, we must have faith in Christ; and our faith in Christ is the result of “*the faith of Christ*” as our Savior in this world.

**OUR FAITHFUL SURETY**

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“*The faith of Jesus Christ*” — **What exactly does that mean?** When the Holy Spirit speaks about “*the faith of Jesus Christ*” he is referring to our Savior’s faithful performance of all the Father’s will as our covenant Surety, Substitute and Redeemer.

- “*The faith of Jesus Christ*” refers to our Savior’s fidelity as Jehovah’s righteous Servant.
- It speaks of his faithful performance in our place, as our Substitute, of all that was necessary for the salvation of God’s elect.
- “*The faith of Jesus Christ*” refers to his faithfulness in accomplishing all that which the Father trusted to his hands as our Mediator (Ephesians 1:12).

### **FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS**

When the Word of God speaks about “*the faith of Christ*,” the word “*faith*” speaks both of **our Savior’s trust in God** as the perfect man and of his faithfulness to God as his Servant. It speaks not only of trust, but **also of loyalty and fidelity**. We see a clear example of the word faith being used this way in **Romans 3:3-4**.

(Romans 3:3-4) “For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? (4) God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”

**When Paul speaks here of “the faith of God,” it is obvious that he is referring to the truth, veracity, fidelity and faithfulness of God. In fact, the word commonly translated “faith” in the New Testament is translated “fidelity” in Titus 2:10.**

(Titus 2:10) “Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”

When Paul here exhorts servants to be faithful in all things to their masters, “*showing all good fidelity*,” the word could be translated, “showing all good faith.” It is in this sense that he uses the phrase “*the faith of Jesus Christ*.” **Our justification was accomplished and eternal redemption was obtained for us by Christ’s faithfulness in doing all that he came here**

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**to do for us, according to the will of God** (Matthew 1:21; Hebrews 10:1-14).

(Matthew 1:21) “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

(Hebrews 10:1-14) “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (2) For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. (3) But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. (4) For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. (5) Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: (6) In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. (7) Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. (8) Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; (9) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

**OUR KINSMAN REDEEMER**

As portrayed in the book of Ruth, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer. As Boaz did for Ruth all that she could not do for herself, what we could not do for ourselves Christ has done for us as our Substitute and Savior, as our Kinsman Redeemer. He took our place before the law of God, assumed total responsibility for us, obeyed the law perfectly, bringing in everlasting righteousness and died under the penalty of the law, satisfying

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all its holy demands by his death upon the cursed tree, when he was made to be sin for us.

Redemption, as described in the law and illustrated in the book of Ruth, required two things on the part of the redeemer. **First**, the redeemer had to be able and willing to redeem. **Second**, he had to faithfully perform all that was required by the law to buy back the lost inheritance of his needy kinsman.

**The one needing redemption was totally dependent upon the faithfulness of the kinsman redeemer for deliverance.** Ruth laid herself down at Boaz's feet, looking to him alone for everything her soul required. And she found all in him. He would not rest until he had performed the thing.

So it was with us! **The debt and penalty of our sins** was one from which we could not escape. **The righteousness required by God's holy law** we could not perform. — "*By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified!*" None of our works, no matter how well intentioned, no matter how well performed, can propitiate God's justice and justify us in his sight. **We desperately need and must have a Redeemer**, One who is able and willing to do everything required by God's holy law and justice for us. We must have a Redeemer who is able and willing, but more, — We must have a Redeemer who has actually stepped out onto the stage of time and faithfully performed all the work for us. "*Behold the Man!*" — Here is our mighty Boaz, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Galatians 4:4-5).

(Galatians 4:4-5) "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Thanks be to God for "*the faith of Jesus Christ*" and the redemption, justification and salvation he accomplished by his faithfulness as our Substitute and Surety!

**THE VERSES**

Look at the passages in which Paul uses this tremendous phrase — "*The faith of Jesus Christ*," and rejoice in the glorious good news of the gospel

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— redemption obtained and justification accomplished by the faithful obedience of Christ as the sinner's Substitute.

(Romans 3:21-22) “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (22) Even the righteousness of God *which is* **by faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:”

(Galatians 2:15-16) “We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, (16) Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but **by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

(Galatians 3:22) “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise **by faith of Jesus Christ** might be given to them that believe.”

(Philippians 3:9) “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is **through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”

**FREE SALVATION**

The “*righteousness of God*,” justification, the promise of justification unto eternal life, does not come and could never come through something we do. Never! — “*Salvation is of the Lord!*” It has been accomplished and comes to sinners by “*the faith of Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 1:11-12; 3:8-12). **It costs our Savior dear; but the salvation he gives is a totally free salvation.**

(Ephesians 1:11-12) “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: (12) That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”

(Ephesians 3:8-12) “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; (9) And to make all *men* see what

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is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: (10) To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, (11) According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: (12) In whom we have boldness and access with confidence **by the faith of him.**”

By Christ’s faithful obedience unto death in our room and stead, every sinner who trusts him has been made completely **worthy of God’s everlasting approval in heaven’s eternal glory,** and shall have it. Let us give thanks to our great God for such grace by such a Savior (Colossians 1:12-14).

(Colossians 1:11-14) “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; (12) Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins.”

**The life we now have and enjoy in Christ, that eternal life, which is God’s free gift to us, comes to us “by the faith of the Son of God”** (Galatians 2:19-20).

(Galatians 2:19-20) “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. (20) I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live **by the faith of the Son of God,** who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

**OUR FAITH IN CHRIST**

Does all of this mean that sinners must not be called upon to believe in Christ? Does this mean that “*faith in Christ*” is unnecessary? Not at all! Our “*faith in Christ*” is every bit as necessary for our eternal salvation as “*the faith of Christ*” as our Savior. The Scriptures speak just as often and just as forcefully about our “*faith in Christ*” as they do of “*the faith of Christ*”

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(Acts 3:16; 24:24; Romans 3:25; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:15; Colossians 1:4; 2:5).

(Acts 3:16) “And his name **through faith in his name** hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.”

(Acts 24:24) “And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and **heard him concerning the faith in Christ.**”

(Romans 3:25) “Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation **through faith in his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;”

(Galatians 3:26) “For ye are all the children of God **by faith in Christ Jesus.**”

(Ephesians 1:15) “Wherefore I also, after I heard of **your faith in the Lord Jesus**, and love unto all the saints.”

(Colossians 1:4) “Since we heard of **your faith in Christ Jesus**, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,”

(Colossians 2:5) “For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and **the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.**”

**I call upon you now to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and do so with this word from God Almighty to you. — Are you listening? — This is a sure thing. — This is a lead pipe synch. — “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life.*” I say to you exactly what Paul said to the Philippian jailor, when he came trembling and fell down at Paul’s feet, crying, “*What must I do to be saved?*” — “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!*”

**If you trust Christ, you now live “by the faith of the Son of God” who loved you and gave himself for you.** You have redemption, righteousness, justification, and eternal life. You have everything included in that

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magnificently huge word – “*SALVATION!*” It was all obtained for you by “*the faith of Jesus Christ.*” Even your faith in him, and mine, were obtained for us by “*the faith of Jesus Christ.*” No wonder Paul speaks as he does in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:30-31.

(1 Cor 1:30-31) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

Amen.