

Faith isn't simply to believe that we can do or have all things because we feel spiritually strong. That is the equivalent of pride.

Rather, true faith is to believe God in Christ, with the result that our life is focused on Him, His Word, and to totally trust and follow Him in all circumstances.

As such, Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

How is our faith nourished and strengthened?

Romans 10:17 says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

How do we live our faith?

Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Therefore, we must steadfastly study His Word so we can know what Christ desires from us.

The reason James 2:17 says: "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

Is my faith truly in Christ so I feed on His Word and follow Him?

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THE PURPOSE OF TRUE FAITH

*“For everyone who has been born
of God overcomes the world.
And this is the victory that has
overcome the world, our faith.”*

1John 5:4

What is God’s purpose for believers to live by faith through all circumstances of life?

John 6:35: “Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

Ephesians 3:16: “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.”

Romans 15:13: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Ephesians 6:16: “In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

1Peter 1:8-9: “Though you do not see Him now, you trust Him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. The reward for trusting Him will be the salvation of your souls.”

Why is faith so vital, and a prerequisite to please God?

Hebrews 11:6: “Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

How strong and sincere is my faith in Christ, so as to please God, live by the power of the Holy Spirit and overcome the world?

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As believers and followers of Christ, will we face challenges to our faith?

Here's what Jesus said in John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

How must we face those challenges?

Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

1John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

1Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

Philippians 3:13-14: "But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Therefore:

Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."

How committed am I to live by God's Word, and how steadfast am I to resist the enemy?

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HEAVENLY REWARDS FROM FAITH IN CHRIST

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16

The most powerful and blessed gift we receive from believing in Christ is to receive the gift of eternal life.

What else does scripture declare about the rewards from living by faith in Christ?

Jesus in John 7:38 said, “Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

Psalm 37:4: “Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

Joshua 1:9: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.”

The reason why:

Galatians 3:9: “All who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.”

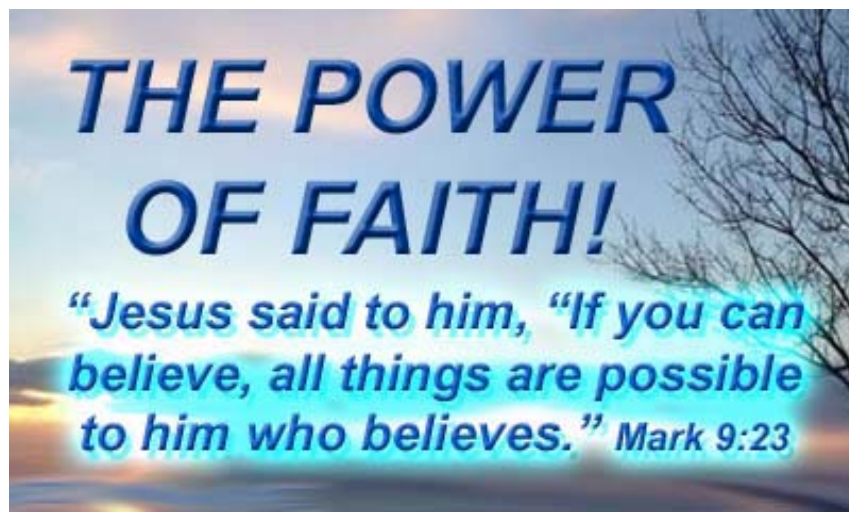
How then must we live by faith and trust God in all circumstances of life?

Galatians 6:9: “Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

Acts 20:24: “I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.”

How strongly anchored is my faith in Christ so as to focus my heart on finishing the race and be His witness?

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Talk about power! Jesus said that everything is possible to him who believes.

In Philippians 4:13 Paul said: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Therefore, if it is Christ who strengthens us through faith, we must ask ourselves this question:

In whatever I ask by faith, will Christ be honored and worshipped? A clear requirement if it is "Christ in us" that will strengthen us, right?

As well, is my faith in my faith, or is it in Christ who died for me, so His light shines through me?

Indeed, faith is powerful, but it must be to the glory of God.

What else does the Word of God teach us about the power of faith?

Hebrews 11:3: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."

That's why, as Jesus said in Mark 11:23, that faith can move mountains.

What however does the power of faith accomplish in a believer's life?

2Timothy 1:7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."

Ephesians 3:20: "Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

Am I living in the power of faith to the glory of Christ?

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A most authentic proof of faith in God is undoubtedly translated into the commitment to love God in faithfully abiding in Christ.

When asked by a lawyer what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus replied by asking him what the law says. Then the lawyer answered:

Luke 10:27: "You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind." And, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Then verse 28: "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"

To love God above anyone and even ourselves is proof of true faith.

That's why the apostle in 1John 5:3 said: "Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome."

In John 14:21 Jesus declared, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

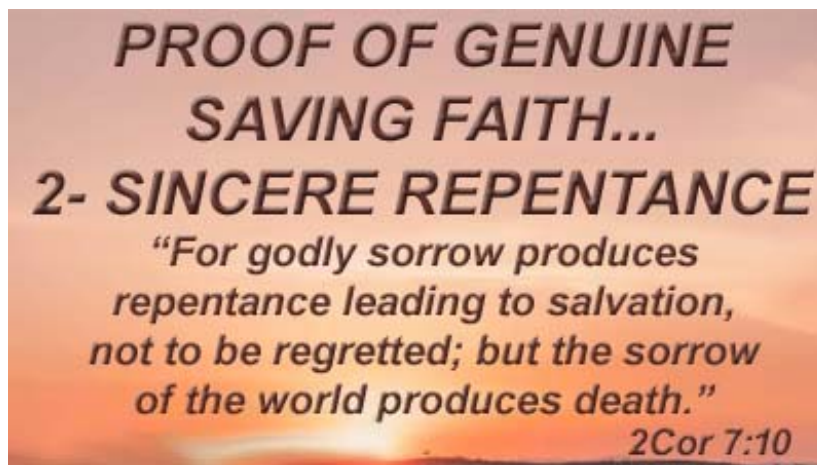
As such, 1John 2:15-17 cautions us: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Why?

Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be."

How genuine is my faith and love for God, in faithfully abiding in Christ right now?

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The first revelation we get from God in truly believing in Christ, is: Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Therefore we must truly repent because, as Proverbs 28:13 says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy."

Why?

1John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

1John 1:10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."

Acts 17:30-31: "In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the Man he has appointed."

In Romans 2:4, Paul challenged those who continue to sin saying, "Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

In other words, a repentant heart is the proof of our authentic confession of belief in Christ.

The reason Jesus said:

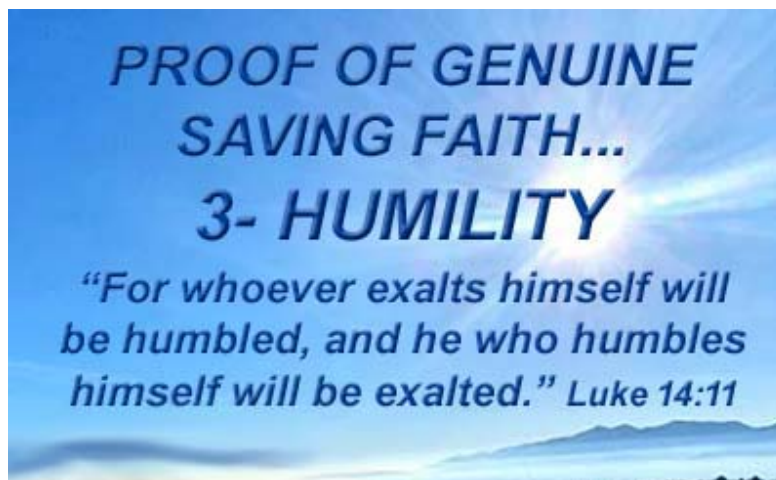
Luke 13:3: "Unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

In Matthew 3:8 He added, "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance."

Does the slightest sin in my life instantly produce a repentant heart, or do I just write it off from my mind?

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Two very opposite concepts in life are pride and humility. Very importantly however is that Christ enjoins us to be humble.

How must we live humbly in the sight of God and man?

James 3:13: "Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom."

Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

Colossians 3:12: "Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering."

2Chronicles 7:14: "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Why must we be humble with God and man?

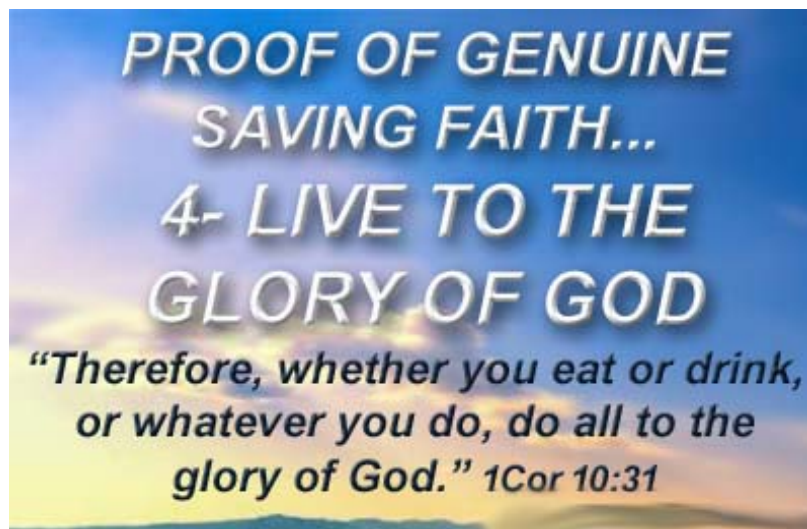
James 4:6: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

James 4:10: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."

Proverbs 11:2: "Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom."

Do I faithfully and humbly follow and serve my Savior and Lord Jesus Christ?

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Our world right now is focused on glorifying the flesh in complete rejection of God, and on top of this, in a most decadent manner.

What does scripture declare about this?

Isaiah 43:7: "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

Jeremiah 9:23-24: "Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I *am* the LORD, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth."

Isaiah 42:8: "I *am* the LORD, that *is* My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images."

Why?

2Cor 4:6: "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ."

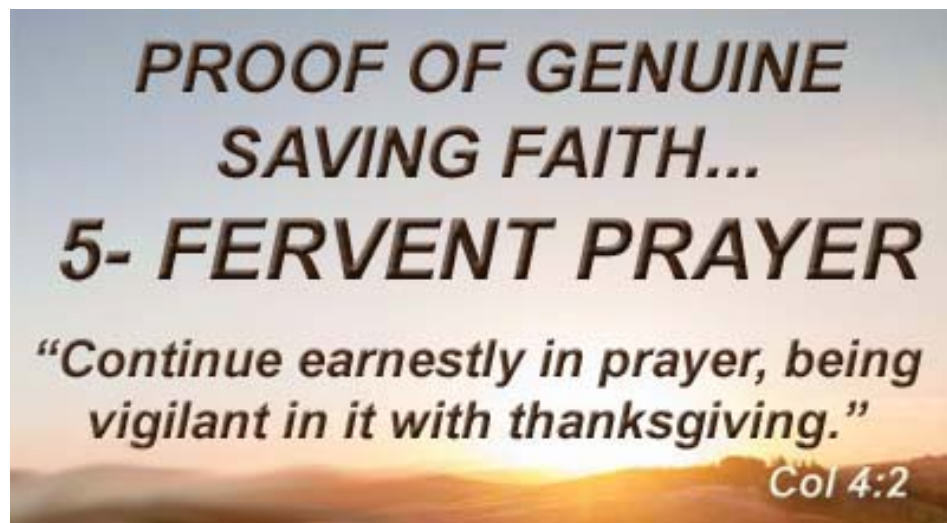
Therefore:

John 15:8: "This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples."

Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

Do I glory in the flesh, or am I rather living to the glory of God in Christ Jesus?

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Prayer is in fact a great blessing God grants to those who seek Him in truth. In essence, to pray is to have a conversation with Almighty God through Christ our Savior, understanding that we have become part of the family of God.

Here's what Jesus taught us on prayer:

Luke 18:1: "Men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

Matthew 6:7: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words."

John 15:7: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."

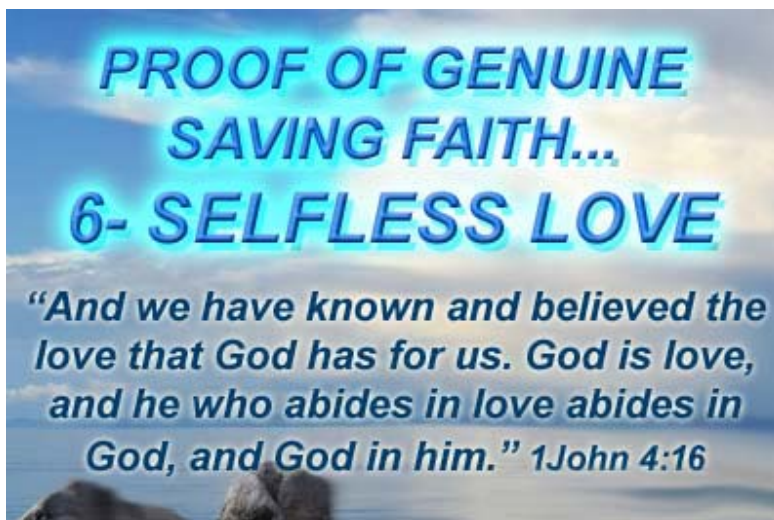
The reason why Paul said in Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Why?

1John 5:14: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

Have I made prayer a sought after time with Almighty God in line with my authentic faith in God and Christ?

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Jesus in Mark 12:30-31 commands us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, as well as to love our neighbor as ourselves.

What is sincere love?

1Cor 13:4-6: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

1John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

Is love proof of our faith in Christ?

1John 4:7-8: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

1John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death."

To what extent must our love be manifested?

Matthew 5:44: "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

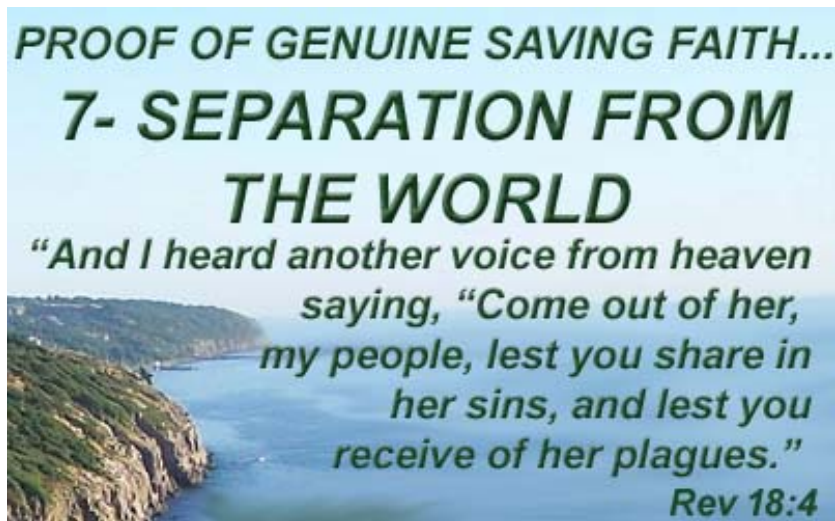
And the best proof of God's love is:

Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Why must authentic faith in Christ produce selfless love in my life?

Read John 3:16-17 very, very slowly!

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Here's a list of scriptures that clearly commands us to not follow the world, and even warns us of its consequences:

1John 2:15: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

James 4:4: "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

2Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

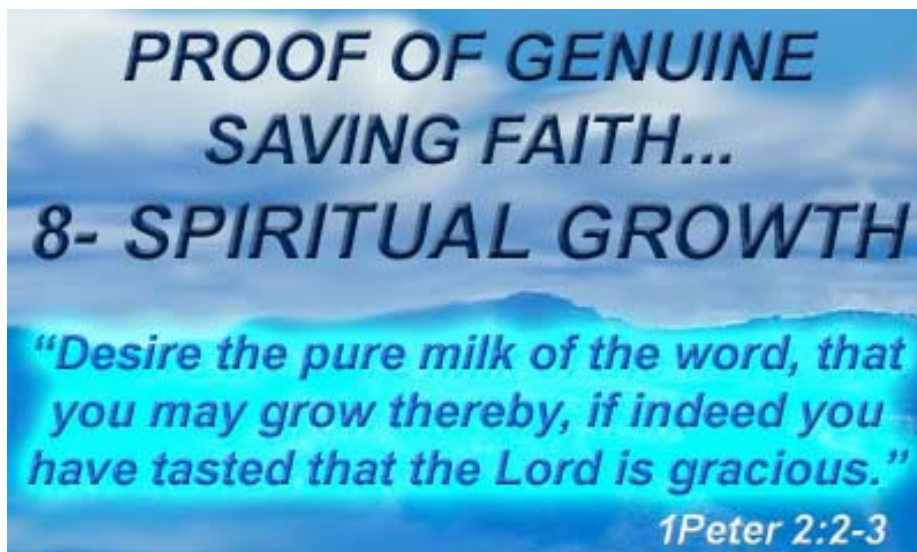
Why?

1Peter 2:9-10: "You *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

Philippians 3:20: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Am I steadfast in following Christ, or do I dare flirt with the world?

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Just as we grow in knowledge in this life, we must also grow spiritually in the knowledge of God and Christ.

How is that accomplished?

Colossians 2:6-7: “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God.”

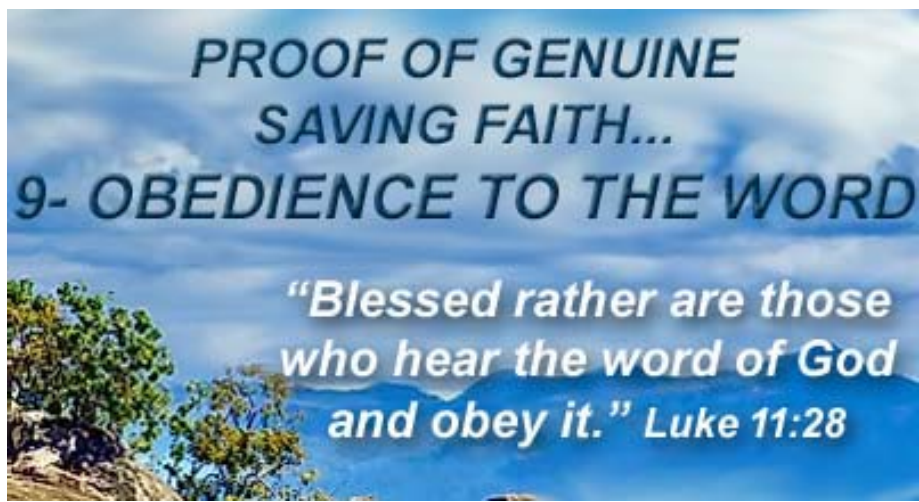
Why?

John 15:1-2, 4: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” “Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.”

Ephesians 4:14-15: “That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.”

On a score of 1 to 10, how would I rate my growth in the knowledge of, and obedience to Christ?

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It is easy to claim that we believe in Christ and are saved. However, does our faith translate into a thirst for God's Word and a desire to obey and follow Christ?

Here's what Jesus said on this:

John 14:23: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Then, Jesus addressing hypocrites:

Luke 6:46: "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."

Now, here's the proof of authentic faith in Christ:

1John 2:3-5: "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His Word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him."

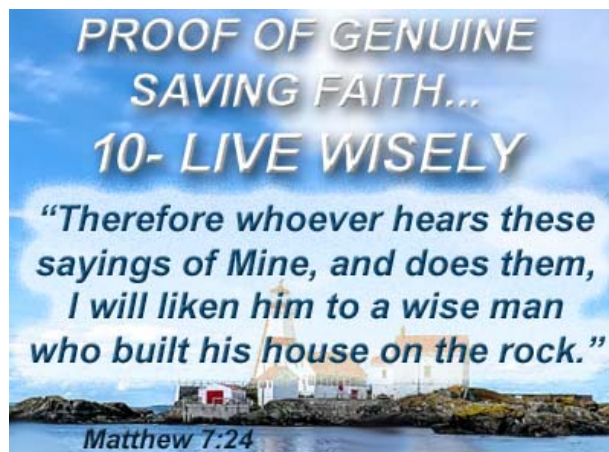
What then is our only secure source of truth?

2Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

How obedient am I to follow Christ and abide by His Word?

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Evidently, to live in abiding by the Word of God, is a clear proof of authentic faith in Christ.

What does scripture teach us on this?

Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding."

James 3:17: "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."

Colossians 4:5-6: "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

The purpose being:

1Corinthians 1:30: "It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God."

The reason we are warned:

Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

Therefore:

Eph 5:15-16: "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Colossians 3:16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

Is my spiritual House built on the Rock of Christ, so I live by the wisdom of His Word?

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