

Faith and Our Responsibility
(The Christian Walk)

Matthew 7:24-26 - Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

Summary: True Christian life is one of faith in God's love for us and faith that I am saved from the bondage of Satan by Christ's willing sacrifice for me, and all the fulfillment of my responsibility to apply God's Word to my life and become as Christ, even as he said: "Be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior is the beginning of my responsibility, not the end of it. To fulfill this responsibility, I must consciously and willfully "divide myself in two" daily, making myself an acceptable offering before God, separating from temptations and ways of the Devil as spelled out in the Word (Bible) and walking the walk of love exemplified by Jesus.

We are grateful for the salvation won through the victory over death by our Lord Jesus Christ. We could never save ourselves. But with the gift of redemption/salvation comes also the responsibility to walk the Christian walk and to become as Christ (Matthew 5:48).

Our responsibility to walk the Christian walk is to read, trust, obey, and follow the Word of God, and to do this we must make ourselves an offering.

In the Old Testament, a pure offering was one that had been cut in two (as when Abraham cut the animals in two) representing the separation of good and evil (or good from evil) within man, the person making the offering, thus making him a purified offering that could be received by God (who is pure). A sharp knife was used. In the same manner, in order for us to be a pure offering before God and therefore claimed by God, we must also cut (divide) ourselves in two, separating good from evil within ourselves. The knife we use is the sharp knife of Truth (God's Word).

See James 1:19-21 – “...Put away all filthiness,...and receive with meekness the implanted word...”

Rev. 1:16 – “...from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword...”

Isaiah 49:2 – “He made my mouth like a sharp sword...”

Thus, Faith and Our Responsibility is to vigorously cut ourselves in two by applying God’s Word (as given in the Bible) to our lives and to separate ourselves from bad thoughts, words, and deeds (actions). The Word (Bible) says don’t even think ill of our neighbor or even think lustful thoughts. On the contrary, the Word says to “Love thy neighbor as thyself, and do good to those who persecute you.”

It is a misconception to think that Jesus did it all and I don’t have to do anything: “I’m saved by the blood of Jesus and that’s all there is to it.” Still we must ask ourselves, “Am I my brother’s keeper? Am I loving others?” when I accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior, that’s not the end of my responsibility, that’s the beginning of it. The book of James makes it very clear: “Faith without words is dead” (James 2:17). The Christian walk is not just a nice thing to do. I must do it, in order to grow, in order to draw closer to God and His ways. True, I am not saved by my own works; but my words complement and bear witness to the Spirit of God at work within me. There is a direct correlation to being (or feeling) saved and living like Christ. The two must go together.

And the “do”s are clearly spelled out in the Bible: love, care for, forgive, be concerned for others, etc. The “don’t”s are also spelled out: don’t lust, lie, cheat, steal, fornicate, etc.

We must therefore be strict with ourselves, applying God’s Word (Bible) as a sword to our thoughts, words, and deeds (actions). I must make myself clean and strongly divide myself in two, dispelling evil thoughts and desires and focusing on the fulfillment of God’s Will.

My conclusion is that the way to let Christ’s salvific work bloom and blossom within me is to:

- 1) Seek God;
- 2) Study His Word – finding His lessons for ourselves;
- 3) Multiply good thoughts, words, and deeds according to that Word; and

- 4) Identify (based on the Word) and cut from/diminish bad thoughts, words, and deeds.

Christ within us can overcome that sinful nature; but it will take practice and determination, and a daily investment in prayer, study of the Word, and Christian fellowship.

Our Faith and Our Responsibility and our Christian walk can be summarized in a few words: the daily revolution from selfishness to unselfishness, and the full emulation of Jesus Christ.

(Helpful study text:

A religious life is that in which one places himself in the position of a sacrifice and offers himself as an acceptable sacrifice to God by dividing himself in two, representing the separation of good and evil. Therefore, unless we thus separate good from evil in ourselves centered on God's will, a condition for Satan to invade is created.

Lessons Learned from Abraham's Course
Divine Principle, p. 284)