

PHILEMON

Lesson 9: FAITH IN THE SAINTS

26 February, 2016

In verse 5, Paul mentions Philemon's love and faith which he has toward the Lord Jesus. Jesus is worthy of both our love and our faith, so it is freely given to Him.

In the same verse, Paul includes the fact that Philemon also has love and faith "**toward all saints.**" Our various experiences with the saints may cause us to not have faith in them and often we think the worst of them. Yet the Holy Spirit is showing us that it is important for us to not lose faith in our brethren.

Love is not dependent upon the actions, attitudes, or ways of another. If you love someone, you love them regardless of your mood or theirs. Their actions will not change your love for them. Love is you giving to others for their benefit because you genuinely care about them. Whether they give back to you or not is beside the point; it's irrelevant.

God corrects His children because He loves them. You must correct your children if you love them. In fact, if you don't correct them, it reveals that you don't love them. You must not approve of wrong behavior and call that love. Chastening benefits the one you love (Hebrews 12:11).

"**Faith toward all saints**" means that we should always give our brethren the benefit of the doubt. We shouldn't always assume the worst about a Christian just because they don't do things exactly like us. We've got to remember that God is still working in the lives of all His children, including us. Remember that every Christian is at a different stage of their spiritual development. Trust that each saint will continue to grow and mature as the Holy Ghost teaches and convicts and guides and directs. Don't reject a Christian based on your limited knowledge about them. Have high expectations and hopes for them.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

“Charity...believeth all things” (vs. 7). You are to believe that God is working in the life of every saint and that it will turn out for good (Rom. 8:28) in the end. We must be willing to believe the best about all of our brothers and all of our sisters no matter how much evidence is presented to the contrary.

1 TIMOTHY 4:6, 16

When you continue to walk in the light of God’s word, it benefits other Christians. Remember that, believe that and you won’t give up when something disappointing happens that seems to contradict that truth. Praying for others, ministering to others, giving the gospel to others is never a waste of time. Believe that and you won’t quit. Believe that what you’re doing for the Lord is worthwhile.

ISAIAH 36:6

Christians get disappointed sometimes when they lean on somebody and end up hurt by the very person they trusted to help them. Loving people, caring for people, and giving yourself to people will hurt you sometimes. Don’t let that shut you off and cause you to isolate yourself from people.

1 TIMOTHY 6:4

Evil surmising: to imagine the worst in people and then take action based on your misinformed imagination. This can be avoided by acting in faith toward God and man. Remember that God is doing a work in each and every one of your brothers and sisters. That way you won’t ever imagine that they have any ill will toward you.

We need to stop dwelling on all the wrong things we think people are doing and have faith that they’ll turn out alright because God is working in them. Remember the success stories and let them encourage you to have love and faith toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints.