

Faith vs Flesh

TWO KINGDOMS, TWO NATURES, TWO LIVES.

John 3

3 Jesus responded and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

...

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Hebrews 11

1 Now *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. [perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].*

2 *For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.*

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.*

- Faith is a substance, a tangible reality of something that otherwise does not exist. A New Birth! A New Kingdom! A New Life/existence!
- Faith recognises The New AND the old. Two realities! Flesh and Spirit. Paul talks about two natures...
- Seeing beyond the physical...

2 Kings 6

15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

- Gehazi saw by flesh. Elisha saw by faith.

- Faith is not knowledge. It is not church attendance or bible reading. It is one thing to know what The Word of God says and to believe it is truth, but it is altogether different to LIVE it!

James 2

19 You believe that God is one; you do well. So do the demons believe and shudder [in terror and horror]!

20 But are you willing to acknowledge, you foolish person, that faith without works is useless?

...

26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

- NEW BIRTH! NEW LIFE! HIS LIFE! NOT YOUR UNDERSTANDING!

- James is not trying to enforce church attendance, religious obedience or a bigger offering.

- Understanding these two kingdoms/realities is so vital/foundational. Faith sees and enters The Kingdom of God, a Kingdom which is eternal, everlasting and unchanging just as God is faithful. The flesh life is brief, full of uncertainty and fear and constantly striving to find peace and power.

Romans 7

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

The Spiritual life is God's life granted to us in and through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith that will produce substance and evidence of that Life. A life not bound by changing emotions but set at liberty by faith in the unchanging Word of God!

The flesh life is always fluctuating through emotions and circumstances. It is the flesh life that we constantly battle. It is the flesh that the Devil will constantly try to manipulate through, distraction, temptation or fear.

Understanding these two kingdoms/realities and the battle between them is so vital/foundational.

FAITH LIVES

Psalm 36

7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

8 They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.

9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

- We can study these things and draw out great truths. We can have an academic understanding... But are we simply enjoying this reality?! Is His loving kindness truly precious to us? Are we truly trusting in Him and so enjoying His perfect peace and rest?

- Do we really DELIGHT in Him?

- Are you ABUNDANTLY SATISFIED with His fullness this morning? Are you ABUNDANTLY SATISFIED when you go home? When you go to work?

- We will at times experience earthly, fleshly lack but, by faith, we can live abundantly satisfied with His fullness! We can constantly, unchangingly live drinking the rivers of His pleasures, rivers of Living Waters! Sometimes it may feel like Mary on a donkey, mile after mile, door after door... But Faith already possesses the blessing!

Psalm 139

2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.

- He knows! Truly The Lord knows it all! He knows our name, He knows our frame, He remembers that we are dust... It is such a precious comfort to remember that we are transparent before The Lord! He knows every part! And yet...

Psalm 139

5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me.

- Despite knowing my thoughts, my heart, my sin, my weakness... Yet He hedges me, protects me, guards me all around. He lays His hand upon me! He is close enough to touch us in intimate reassurance, comfort and healing.

Psalm 139

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

- The question is rhetorical. There is nowhere we can go! We can never run or hide from His knowing. HE ABIDES WITH ME!! Hallelujah, He abides! There is nowhere outside of His sovereign rule, His loving reach, His hearing ear and His comforting voice!

Psalm 139

16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

- He truly knows our frame. He knows what we are capable of, what we can endure and what He has created us for! He FORMED us! He took time in designing and creating us! You are no accident or just out together in some chance way to be different. Each one has been thought about, considered and born for such a time as this! He, the author, wrote you the way you are. You've been designed for a purpose! Born for a purpose!

- Your days are written down! Oh take such great comfort in that Our Father knows!!

The flesh can know these truths and understand the greatness of them, but FAITH LIVES!! Faith LIVES truth! Faith lives in The Kingdom of God. Faith LIVES in the fullness of God's promises! Faith delights in and ENJOYS The Lord!

FAITH IN JESUS

John 6

35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 7

38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

- Are we living in the flesh or by faith? Are we starving from lack of food? Are we thirsting because of a lack of refreshment? Or are we drinking at the river of His pleasures? Are we feasting on His FULLNESS? Is His all-sufficient life flowing out from our hearts?

- Not only does faith feast and drink at The Lord's table and of His fullness but out of the believer's on heart will flow out the life and provision of The Lord! His life flows out!! His LIFE! His joy! His peace and His rest!

- Let's examine ourselves. Are we living by faith?

Romans 4

3 For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed in God, and it was credited to his account as righteousness.

4 Now to a labourer, his wages are not counted as a favour or a gift, but as an obligation (something owed to him).

5 But to one who, not working [by the Law], trusts in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness.

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.

- We see here again that divide between flesh and faith. Paul lives a life in the flesh but he lives by faith!

- In the flesh we are fleeting, empty lives but by faith we live as more than conquerors, by faith Jesus has given me every victory, by faith I enjoy that The Lord has given me ALL things that pertain unto Life and Godliness! ALL THINGS!!

- If we truly have faith to believe these things then we should walk different!! We will NOT walk in defeat! Consider the life that truly believes these things and walks in the goodness/fullness of them!

Hebrews 3

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4

1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,'" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- Knowledge of His Word is not enough. His word must be mixed with faith. It must be received by faith and practiced by faith!

- Israel were looking through fleshly eyes seeing only their fleshy desires.

- There are promises, victories and provisions available to us if we will only have faith to believe!