



Thursday, April 2, 2026

Foundations for the Believer to Live the Spiritual Life.

The Transformed Life.

2. The Faith-Rest Life, (continued).

Faith has 3 Essential Elements: 1) Know God's Word, 2) Agree with God's Word, 3) Rely upon God's Word.

Four problems to guard against, so you continue to grow in faith. In terms of spiritual growth and the transformed life, we need to guard against four serious problems that work against our faith and spiritual transformation.

They are:

- 1) A Spirit of Legalism.
- 2) Working in the Energy of the Flesh.
- 3) The Mentality of Our Culture.
- 4) The Imbalance of Passivity, (continued).**

Passivity is the condition, quality, or state of being passive; inactivity, dormancy, latency, the tendency to remain in a given state, a lack of initiative, the trait of remaining inactive. Biblical Passivity is neglecting personal responsibility to apply God's Word by faith, often masked as waiting on God, humility, yielding, or surrender. The "let go and let God" mentality.

Biblically, God calls believers not only to believe, but to actively respond to Him in faith, cf. **Joshua 1:8-11**. We have already noted:

- a) God commands active faith, not inactivity.
- b) The Christian life requires diligence.
- c) Passivity often disguises itself as "Waiting on God."
- d) The Believer is called to walk by the Spirit.
- e) Passivity opens the door to sin and spiritual drift or decline; Beware of Cosmic Evangelism.

We now see:

f) God provides power, but we must apply it. God supplies everything needed, but expects us to use it, **Eph 6:10-11; 2 Tim 1:7**.

2 Tim 1:7, "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity (fear, cowardice), but of power and love and discipline."

Eph 6:10-11, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil."

Divine provision does not eliminate human responsibility.

g) Passivity contradicts our identity in Christ. Believers are described as ambassadors, soldiers, workers, athletes, and priests; all active roles, **2 Cor 5:20; 1 Peter 2:9; 2 Tim 2:4-6**.

2 Cor 5:20, "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

1 Peter 2:9, “But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

2 Tim 2:4-6, “No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. ⁵Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.”

Our identity in Christ calls for active participation, not passive existence.

Biblically, Passivity is a failure to actively live out faith. It resists growth, avoids responsibility, and often disguises itself as spirituality. God's design is: active dependence on Him, expressed through obedient action. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between: Passivity (sinful inactivity) and our active faith-rest in God (faith-filled trust). We rest in God's power, yet we actively walk in obedience to Him and His Word.

Heb 4:10-11, “For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his (*human good*) works, as God did from His. ¹¹Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following the same example of disobedience* (*human good works for salvation*).”

To be sure, each of the above commands are to be done in the Spirit by faith in God's strength, but still, we have a vital part; we are responsible. God does not walk in the Spirit for us. As such, we see the blending of these two concepts, responsibility and dependence, in the following two passages:

Col 1:29, “And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.”

1 Cor 15:10, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.”

Understanding the balance between dependence on God and actively working within God's enabling power protects a believer from two serious errors:

1) The error that there is some sort of switch which we can flip in order to turn off the current of temptation and keep it from flowing through us.

2) The Christian life is a passive one in which all the believer does is “yield.”

Gal 5:17, “The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another.”

The spiritual life is neither automatic nor passive. Bill Lawrence has a good summary of this.

We are Responsible to Obey by Faith.

In a sense, the believer's responsibility in the spiritual life can be summarized in one word: Obedience.

The bottom line of the believer's responsibility in the spiritual life is obedience. Believers are to do what God has told them to do and they can do what God has told them to do because the Holy Spirit makes this possible, though not without the exercise of discipline.

Discipline is not a matter of obeying God in our own strength even as we obeyed our parents or our employers in our pre-Christ days. Discipline is a matter of faith, because, “whatever is not from faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23). Discipline must be an act of trust in God’s resources through which the believer draws upon the infinite power of God and meets His righteous standard.

Obedience by faith means that we act by dependence on the Holy Spirit and count on His enabling power as we trust Him. It means that we do act, that we exercise every ounce of energy the Lord Jesus Christ “... mightily works within ...” us (Col. 1:29). We act in His power; we obey through the Spirit’s resources. We act, but Christ does it through us in the sense that it is His power that enables us to do what He commands. In terms of power, He does it through us; in terms of activity, we do it through Him. We do what we could never do in our own capacity: we obey God and live up to His righteous standard.

Your obligation is not to do it in any strength of your own, or to try to do it, but to do it in the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit ... You will do it in the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit and this is where the believer’s responsibility brings him. That is the thing that constitutes the ability to live the spiritual life and that is none other than the ability to walk by means of the Spirit in your daily life. That is the salvation from the reigning power of sin ... as L. S. Chafer noted “Therefore you fall back upon the infinite power--think of it--the infinite power of the indwelling Spirit.”

We draw on the Spirit’s power through a simple prayer of dependence in which we acknowledge our inability to accomplish anything for God apart from Him. We tell the Spirit, “I cannot do this in my own power. I give myself to You for You to enable me to do what You want me to do and I thank You by faith that You will keep Your promise to me to enable me to obey and serve You.” Then we act on that prayer and move to do the thing for which we are trusting God. In that moment we discover the infinite power which enables us to do what we could never do on our own.” (William D. Lawrence, Dallas Seminary notes, 1993)

Any of one of these four dangers that can inhibit our growth in faith will also kill our joy in Christ and leave us powerless to truly experience God’s deliverance and the Christ-like life, i.e., Christ producing His character in us, i.e., the fruit of the Spirit. Because these dangers are in essence **faithless** regarding our new life in Christ, our position in Him, and in the power of the indwelling Spirit, they leave us **powerless** to deal with our spiritual enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, cf. **Col 2:16-23**.

In the Transformed Life, we must have spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible study, and worship. While these are crucial for building faith and cultivating our walk with the Lord, we should never do them to merit God’s favor because we already have His favor as believers in Christ; we are complete in Him, **Col 2:10; Eph 1:3**.

Col 2:10, “And in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.”

Eph 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

Rather, these spiritual disciplines are to be done as acts of simple faith, out of a spirit of faith-dependence on the Lord. We do them to develop and maintain a deeper faith relationship and walk with God, never to achieve status with God, **Prov 3:5-6; Rom 1:17; Gal 2:20**.

Prov 3:5-6, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Rom 1:17, “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.”

Gal 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and 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 delivered Himself up for me.”

Just as we eat wholesome meals for physical strength, so we are to study the Bible and pray that we might grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and experience God’s strength, **1 Peter 2:2-3; 2 Peter 3:18.**

1 Peter 2:2-3, “Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.”

2 Peter 3:18, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”