

Kinds of Faith That Fail To Save Us

Text: 1 Timothy 1:5

Introduction:

1. The Christian is threatened not so much by the loss of faith altogether as he is by various kinds of “*substitute*” faith or perversions of faith.

2. We may “*believe*” – but we may still need help with our “*unbelief*” - **Mark**

9:24.

3. What are some of these kinds of “*faith*” that fall short of saving faith?

I. COUNTERFEIT FAITH

- A. If we are not careful, we will put our faith in counterfeits.
- B. Satan has always manipulated those who are naive about outward appearances - **2 Corinthians 11:13,14**. Cf. **Matthew 7:15**.
- C. But also, it is possible for our faith itself to be counterfeit, to be only a sham - **Matthew 15:8,9; 23:27,28**.

II. FAITH IN SELF

- A. We live in a self-directed age when “*self*” is the prime concern.
- B. There is a good thing called self-confidence.
- C. But to place one’s ultimate trust in self is foolish and ultimately destructive - **Proverbs 16:25; 28:26**.

III. SELF-RIGHTEOUS FAITH

- A. Do we trust in our own righteousness to save us? Cf. **Job 4:6**.
- B. Those who are the hardest on others’ faults are often the ones who suppose they have none of their own - **Luke 18:9**. Cf. **Luke 7:36-50**.
- C. To trust in our own righteousness is to reject the only real means of righteousness God has provided - **Romans 10:3**.

IV. PARTIAL FAITH

- A. Sometimes we need to have a more “*wholehearted*” faith - e.g. **2 Chronicles 25:2**.
- B. Too often our faith in God is diluted with foreign elements.
- C. Singleness of purpose and devotion may be involved in the beatitude concerning the “*pure in heart*” (**Matthew 5:8**) – we must be those who love one thing.

V. MIS-ORIENTED FAITH

- A. It may be our faith is placed in the wrong object - **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**.
- B. As a preacher, I need to exercise care lest I encourage others to put their faith in the wrong things.
- C. The only faith that saves is faith in the Lord. Cf. **2 Timothy 1:12**.

VI. SKEPTICAL FAITH

- A. “*Skeptical faith*” in one sense is a contradiction of terms – but what we mean is a faith which vacillates and wavers.
- B. We need to avoid being “*double-minded*” (**James 1:6-8**).
- C. We also need to avoid being cynical about the Lord. Cf. **Matthew 27:11**.

VII. SMALL FAITH

- A. Our faith must be strong enough to “*stand the test*” - **Matthew 14:28-31. Cf. Luke 22:31,32**.
- B. One can never have too much faith!
- C. Indeed, we all need to be asking the Lord, “*Help my unbelief*” (**Mark 9:24**). Cf. **Luke 17:5**.

Conclusion:

- A. May our faith be the “*real thing*” - **2 Timothy 1:5**.
- B. True faith “*comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (**Romans 10:17**).
- C. May our faith be such that we may be known by it - **Romans 1:8**.