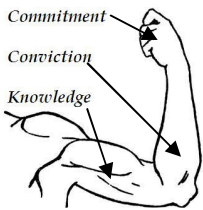


## BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED – GOD GAVE US FAITH (II)!



Faith begins with *knowledge*,  
continues into *conviction*  
and ends in *commitment*.

Faith is the empty hand that takes hold of Christ!

Anything that is precious will always have fakes! Faith is precious, real faith! Hence, you can expect to find counterfeit faith! Today, we shall examine the **Four Hallmarks of True Faith**. But before that, remember that real faith can sometimes be very weak, yet it is nevertheless true faith. When you find faith to be weak, please do not mistaken it to be an impostor. No, it is genuine faith, and therefore it is precious. A dirty and tired looking \$5 note is worth far more in value than a shining, counterfeit note of \$1000!



We are to believe in Christ alone, we are justified by faith alone but **REAL FAITH** is never alone. **MR. REAL FAITH** is always accompanied by his wife -- **MADAM TRUE REPENTANCE**. Like any good wife, **TRUE REPENTANCE** is always present when **REAL FAITH** is present. And like any good husband, **REAL FAITH** is always by her side.

They are always together, they always go together, because God has put them together. Moreover, **REAL FAITH** is very fruitful. The parable of the sower and the seed talks about bearing fruits, some 30-fold, some 60-fold and some 100-fold! According to **2 Peter 1:5-7**, **REAL FAITH** has seven children, and here are their names: *Virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love*. A faith that is barren is an impostor. A faith that is without works is dead. *What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can (that) faith save him?* (**James 2:14**) **Is your faith alone? Does it bear fruits?**



Mr. Counterfeit Faith will not last. One distinguishing mark is that it is only temporary. On the other hand, **REAL FAITH** will persevere, no matter what. Remember the parable of the sower and the seeds. Remember what happens to those seeds that fell among the thorns. Well, they grow very well, didn't they?

And then what happened? They were choked to death! You see, a counterfeit faith cannot withstand the pressures of the world. The cares, the riches, the pleasures of life -- all these will choke it to death. But not so for **REAL FAITH**! There is a tenacity in it. The world will attack **REAL FAITH**, very fiercely at times. But it will fight, fight to the end. And it will overcome the world!! **Is this your faith?**



**REAL FAITH** never chooses which commands to obey or which teachings to believe, because it believes all that God says and obeys all that God commands. Its lifestyle is one of universal submission --- submission to all of God's Word. The submission of

**REAL FAITH** is not struggle-less, but it is universal; its obedience is not perfect, but it is real. Obedience is present because **REAL FAITH** considers all God's Words to be true and right. This is the language of **REAL FAITH** ~ *All Your commandments are faithful. All Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way.* Have you heard of the man who was called the father of the faithful? His name is Abraham and his life demonstrated this characteristic very well. **Romans 4** will tell you that he believes God's most difficult statement ~ *That he will have a son when he is 100 years old.* **James 2** will tell you that he submitted to God's most difficult command ~ *To sacrifice his only son, the promised son - Isaac.* **What is God's most difficult statement for you to believe today? And what is God's most difficult command for you to obey now?** **REAL FAITH** is never choosy. There will always be the desire to keep all, even the most difficult, commandments of God.



*Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious ... (1 Peter 2:7)* Is Jesus Christ very precious to you? **REAL FAITH** is like the man in the parable in **Matthew 13**, prepared and all ready to sell away all he has to buy the pearl of great price. **REAL FAITH** speaks in this way ~

*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon the earth that I desire besides You. Indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.* Is Jesus so precious to you? Yes, more precious than your sins, your house, your car, your career, your reputation, your TV programme, your wife, your husband, your children and even your own life? **Do you value Him that much? Do you love Jesus far, far above everything else and everybody? Is He your Number One Love? Do you so love Him that you will live for Him and die for Him?** If you can't, then it might be a proof that He did not live for you and die for you.

These are the four hallmarks of true faith. Finally, remember that faith is a gift from God and faith is your duty to God. Remember that it is not faith, not even faith in Jesus Christ that saves. Do not make *faith* into an idol in your life. It is Jesus Christ *alone* who saves. So look to Him, turn to Him, come to Him and be saved today.