

Message Seven

**Faith—the Unique Requirement
to Contact God in His New Testament Economy**

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 11:6;
Gal. 1:23; 2:16, 20; 3:2, 5, 26; 5:6

I. “God’s economy...is in faith”—1 Tim. 1:4:

- A. Faith is the unique way for God to carry out His New Testament economy with man—Heb. 11:6.
- B. In the New Testament, faith bears two denotations—objective and subjective:
 - 1. In the objective denotation, faith refers to the entire revelation of the New Testament concerning the person of Christ and His redemptive work—Acts 6:7; 14:22; Rom. 16:26; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Tim. 1:19b; Jude 3, 20.
 - 2. In the subjective denotation, faith refers to the act of believing—Luke 18:8; Mark 11:22; 1 Tim. 1:19a.
- C. The economy of God is a matter in faith, that is, in the sphere and element of faith, in God through Christ.
- D. God’s New Testament economy, which is to dispense Himself into His chosen people, is not in the natural realm nor in the work of the law but in the spiritual sphere of the new creation through regeneration by faith in Christ—Gal. 6:14-15; 3:23-26:
 - 1. By faith we are born of God to be His sons, partaking of His life and nature to express Him—v. 26; John 1:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:4.
 - 2. By faith in Christ we are put into Christ to become the members of His Body, sharing all that He is for His expression—John 3:15; Rom. 12:4-5.

II. “He who was formerly persecuting us is now announcing as the gospel the faith...”—Gal. 1:23:

- A. In Galatians 1:23 faith implies our believing in Christ, taking His person and redemptive work as the object of our faith—1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Tim. 4:7; cf. 1 Tim. 6:10.
- B. The faith, replacing the law by which God dealt with His people in the Old Testament, became the principle by which God deals with His people in the New Testament—Gal. 3:22-24:
 - 1. This faith characterizes the believers in Christ and

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distinguishes them from the keepers of law; this is the main emphasis of the book of Galatians.

2. The law of the Old Testament stresses letters and ordinances, whereas the faith of the New Testament emphasizes Spirit and life.

III. **“Knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law”—2:16:**

- A. Faith is the unique requirement for people to contact God in His New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 11:6.
- B. The faith in Christ by which the believers are justified is related to their appreciation of the person of the Son of God as the most precious One—12:2:
 1. The experiential definition of faith is that faith is the preciousness of Jesus infused into us.
 2. Genuine faith is Christ Himself infused into us to become our ability to believe in Him; after the Lord Jesus has been infused into us, He spontaneously becomes our faith.
- C. When we believe in Christ, we enter into Him; we believe ourselves into Christ and thereby become one spirit with Him—John 3:15; 1 Cor. 6:17.

IV. **“The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me”—Gal. 2:20b:**

- A. Faith is the way for God’s people to apprehend, comprehend, grasp, enjoy, and participate in all that God is to His people through His having been processed.
- B. The faith of the Son of God refers to the faith of Jesus Christ in us (v. 16), which becomes the faith by which we believe in Him—3:22; Rom. 3:22, 26.
- C. As we hear Him and treasure Him, He causes faith to be generated in us, enabling us to believe in Him—Matt. 17:5; Heb. 12:2:

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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1. He becomes the faith in us by which we believe in Him.
2. This faith becomes the faith in Him, and it is also the faith that belongs to Him.

V. “Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?”—Gal. 3:2:

- A. Both the receiving of the Spirit and the supplying of the Spirit are out of the hearing of faith, not out of the works of law—v. 5.
- B. In the Old Testament there was a dispensation of law, but in the New Testament there is a dispensation of faith:
 1. Faith is related to the Spirit and trusts in the operation of the Spirit, who is the realization of Christ—2:20; 3:14.
 2. In the New Testament, faith replaces the law, that we may live Christ by the Spirit—vv. 22-25.
 3. To receive the Spirit out of the hearing of faith is God’s revealed way; it is in the light of God’s revelation and issues in life and glory—Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11, 30.
 4. It is by the hearing of faith that we received the Spirit so that we might participate in God’s promised blessing and live Christ—Gal. 3:14; 2:20.

VI. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus”—3:26:

- A. Faith in Christ brings us into Christ, making us one with Christ, in whom is the sonship.
- B. We must be identified with Christ through faith so that in Him we may have the sonship.

VII. “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith avails, operating through love”—5:6:

- A. Living faith is active; it receives the Spirit of life and thus is full of power.
- B. Faith operates through love to fulfill God’s purpose, that is, to complete the sonship of God for His corporate expression—the Body of Christ.