

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, January 16, 2011
Fine Tuning Your Faith

Our society has already become a post-Christian culture. Christians are looked at as the blight on society and the cause for many ills and hate crimes. The vocal minority has influenced the populace to believe things that are so off base from God's intentions for mankind that they are now looked at as being the truth. A major part of the problem has been the church's failure to be a relevant factor in cultural transformation. Yet God's plan was for us to be "Salt and Light." He intended us to be like Jesus and do what Jesus did with the same Spirit that raised him from the dead. That kind of influence requires much more than just being nice neighbors, although that's a great start. It requires genuine faith, i.e. real faith; the kind of faith that moves mountains. Now before you get nervous here, Jesus told us that if we had faith the size of a mustard seed we would be able to do that. So what's the problem? I believe we just need to fine tune our faith.

Fine tuning your faith requires learning the will of God through his Word, the Bible, and by obedience to the things he shows us to do. Jesus tells us that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. It's not hard. It's just different than following our old patterns of the way we do things. Prayer for some is just giving a shopping list to God of all that they want him to do for them. While that is part of it, the lion's share is to learn what the will of God is and praying it into being. "Help me to be like you, Lord." I am concerned that many do not really know the basis of their faith making it weak and unprotected from the assaults that come from the enemy. We need to take the time to dig in and get equipped for everything that comes our way. First we must learn the Word of God. If Sunday morning is the only word you get, you are malnourished. You need some meat on your bones and that will take some time and effort. You also need to be aware of the emerging viewpoints that are at odds with our faith and learn what God says about them. The New Testament epistles reveal their awareness of the attacks of their day and were equipping against Gnosticism. Today's battles are along the same lines.

2 Peter 1:2-9

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. (NIV)

2 Peter 3:17-18

Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. (NIV)

Colossians 2:6-10

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 **See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.** 9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. (NIV)

We don't lack anything. The Author and Perfecter of our faith lives in us and wants to work through us as we learn who we are in him. Let today be the beginning of a new resolve to grow in grace and knowledge of him.