

## Trust and Saving Faith (Devotional)

The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 5:6, saying, ***“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.”*** God is not pleased with a legalistic obedience, but He is pleased with the exercise of obedient, saving faith, which is motivated by love. Take notice of the motivation of your heart. You and I can accomplish a deed with several different motivations. Those identical deeds can be an act of saving faith or merely a religious exercise. We could be following Satan’s gospel, which teaches that works merit Heaven. That would be motivation of merit. It might be a Pharisaical works that would be seen of men and brings them praise. The motivation could be one of slavish fear to do good works lest he be beaten or damned.

The true believer, however, through the exercise of obedient, saving faith, works from a motive of love. He serves the Lord because he loves Him. He understands that Christ has made such a great sacrifice to redeem such a wretched, miserable creature out of the pit of Hell. Isaiah 51:1 says, ***“Hearken to me, you that follow after righteousness, you that seek Jehovah: look unto the rock whence you were hewn, and to the hold of the pit whence you were dug.”*** It is the pit from whence he was ***“dug”*** by the Father Who sent His Son Who humbled Himself unto death. He sees the great price the Son paid to redeem such a wretch. That prompts such love and such a desire to do what is pleasing to the Lord.

Those who truly love the Lord know it is not because he merits one thing, nor to be seen of men, but to glorify such a loving God and Redeemer. The motive is love; it was love that placed salvation’s plan in our way. Now our motivation to respond to God’s gift of grace must be out of love. We have to love our brother, but we do the things called good works because we love him. We understand that he has a place in eternity. If our brother is less perfect than we are, we must pray that the Lord will redeem him as well. That means we do not have a stone to throw at a brother. Saving faith will motivate the true believer to serve his God whether or not there be a Heaven or Hell. We are not to serve God to merit Heaven or to escape Hell, but we are to serve God from a motive of love.

1 Peter 1:22 tells us, ***“Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently....”*** Now go back to verse 2 of that same chapter: ***“...according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”*** (1 Peter 1:2) The Holy Spirit sanctifies us in our hearts and we are motivated to do that which is pleasing unto God. Obeying the truth through the Spirit shows love as a motive, but love is also the fruit. I just can’t get beyond one statement that the Lord Jesus Christ made; ***“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,”*** (Matthew 22:40). The entire Gospel hangs upon our loving God above all and our neighbor as our self.