

Habakkuk

Chapter 2

4-Behold he who is lifted up, his soul is not upright in him; but the righteous shall live by his faith¹.

¹ What is faith? At its foundation, faith is trust in God. It is trusting: that what God said He will do will surely come to pass. One of the great modern-day tragedies is that many people in church think that faith is merely a set of subjective views of God and of life. To many, faith is little more than their individual preferences and philosophical beliefs. However, these are not what faith is! Faith is supplied to us by God, and begins in our lives by simply trusting God. How do we trust God? We believe what He has said in His word. As we walk with God, there is an ever-increasing supernatural supply of faith given to us by the Holy Spirit. The grace of God has provided us with a proportion of faith (Romans 12:6). As we are faithful to God with what He has given, we are supplied with more!

If you are going to walk uprightly before the Lord, then you are going to have to believe what God has said - and trust that He will not fail you. Paul quoted Habakkuk 2:4 in the New Testament to establish that the saints of God must live by faith, if they are to be numbered among the righteous (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). When we consider the Hebrew word that is used in this passage (emuna) and what it means, we come to a better understanding of the foundational meaning of faith. The Hebrew word is translated "steady or firm" in Exodus 17:12. It is used in Deuteronomy to describe God's total dependability, and is translated "truth" (Deuteronomy 32:4). It is used to describe God's faithfulness in 1 Samuel 26:23, Psalm 36:5; Psalm 40:10 and Lamentations 3:23. It is also used to describe God's works and His words in Psalm 33:4; Psalm 119:86 and Psalm 143:1. God, who is faithful, expects to see those who have entered into relationship with Him remain faithful to Him as well (Proverbs 12:22; 2 Chronicles 19:9).

Keeping in mind that Paul used Habakkuk 2:4 as the basis to describe being made righteous by faith, we come to understand more about the relationship between obedience to God and trust in God - that must exist in those who have been brought into relationship with God. We may safely say that faith is a faithful trusting in God's promises. It is also faithfulness on the part of the believer to know that God is faithful to do those things which he has promised to do (Hebrews 10:23; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23).