

DOING FAITH

Faith is the key to the life of grace. It is saying yes to God freely and as best we can. Faith is trusting God as best we can. Faith is not sophisticated beliefs, strong convictions, or some sort of moral perfection. It is less something we HAVE and more something we DO. Faith is active. In English, Faith is only a noun. We say "I have faith." In biblical languages, however, Faith is a verb also. We could then say "I am faithing." "Faithing" implies active trust, investing our lives in God's promise. Many Christians fear that they do not have enough of the "Thing" "Faith." But if "Faith" is the act of entrusting ourselves to God's care, then all of us may "do faith" regardless of our capacity for believing or defending certain beliefs. In fact, our beliefs usually follow on and grow out of our actions rather than inspiring them. Faith is essential to the life of grace. By doing Faith, we show that we trust God and His purpose for life. By doing Faith, we come to discern God's wisdom and direction for our lives. By doing Faith, we are sustained through disappointments, frustrations, and failures.

Faith is simply turning to God as we are. God accepts us as we are, even with doubts, fears, guilts. Faith confesses "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." And Faith accepts God's love when He says "You are my beloved child." For me, that can be the hardest work of all!

Any discussion of Faith must bring us to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works through our faithing. When faith is exercised, this general presence of God becomes quite present for each one of us in a very individual and personal way. The best way that I can understand this is that I could read all the books on learning French and I could listen to all the French tapes, but if I am going to speak French, I must finally open mouth to speak. We need to act, to allow the Holy Spirit to best work in us. But the choice is ours; the Holy Spirit will not overpower us. However, we become more free, more truly ourselves, who God created us to be, when we release the Holy Spirit in us by faithing. In the process he never does away with anything we essentially are or have; He only enhances what we are and have. We are filled with the Holy Spirit at Baptism. Through Faithing, the Spirit is released more and more. By desiring that release. By willing to be led. By repenting of sin. By entrusting ourselves into His care. Notice that these are all verbs, all things that we DO.

It is through faithing, turning to God, however hesitantly and with whatever doubts, that we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives.

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