

# Faith And Our Future

**Romans 1:20** [NIV] *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”*

One thing we can understand about the nature of the Creator God when we look at His physical creation is that He is a God of variety, for this is the very hallmark of His physical creation throughout the universe.

God is **not** looking for carbon copies of the great men and women of God who lived and died in the past.

**Hebrews 11:31-40** [NIV] *“By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawn in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and ill-treated, the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”*

Within this list is great variety but all had faith in their Creator God.

All have been allocated a reward for their life of faith but have **not** yet received it.

It is plain to see from this text that God had present-day people of faith in mind.

God is still seeking people today to become new individual people of faith.

**God has a future for each of us as human beings however different we are in personality.**

God knew very well what He was doing when He created us to differ in personality, temperament and disposition.

We have come to realise that it is a fact that there are **no** two people exactly, identically alike in the world, even those we call ‘identical twins’ always differ in personality.

God accepts us no matter where we fall within the range of varying human personalities.

God desires to manifest Himself to us and through us, no matter how different we may be.

God makes us all different from one another but by His Holy Spirit He desires to bring divine illumination and power to our beings.

We should thank God for giving us our own individual personalities, temperaments and abilities.

We should **never** waste time and energy trying to fashion ourselves after some other human being, no matter how much we admire that person.

In only one respect should we all try to be alike.

As true Christians we should love God more than anything or anyone else, and we should hate sin and pride even as Jesus hated them.

We should be willing always to obey God as we are led by His Word and His Holy Spirit, [**Acts 5:29; Luke 14:26-27; Romans 8:13-17**].

Apart from that, it is perfectly natural for us to be ourselves, that is, different from each other.

There is another lesson in the Hebrew text we have quoted:

God has never in the past done anything good in response to faith in Him that He is unwilling to do again.

We need only to believe God and obey Him.

God knows how best to use us to bring Him glory and as His witnesses.

**Romans 12:1-2** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

When we truly realise our need for our Saviour and Creator God we can approach Him and expect Him to work in us and through us in a unique way.

God expects each of us to let Him use us in helping people to a life of spiritual blessing and victory over sin.

**Matthew 5:13-16** [NIV] *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

We become “salt” and “light” when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us.

**John 7:38-39** [NIV] *“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

We show this through the combination of our own individual personality and Holy Spirit given abilities.

**1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11** [NIV] *“Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.” ... “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”*

God has chosen to give different people certain spiritual gifts, but do **not** overlook two things about these individual gifts:

Given for the common good, [**verse 7**];

Given as God determines, [**verse 11**].

The Creator God will give these spiritual gifts to harmonise and enhance the personality of the individuals who receive them.

These spiritual gifts will then increase the ability of the individual to be of value to other people's spiritual maturing.

It is good to come to understand that while God wants us to be holy and filled with the Holy Spirit, He does **not** expect us to have the same spiritual insight as He gave to Paul.

You may wish to be like Abraham, Isaac or Jacob but remember they have been asleep for long centuries awaiting their resurrection, but you are still around!

You can witness for Jesus Christ, still pray, give your substance to help those under the pain of personal trials.

In this your generation give the Creator God all of your attention.

Give Him your love, devotion and faithful service.

These simple things can allow us to be God's people of faith in this generation.

**First** – be willing to repent and put away any known sin, [**1 John 1:9**].

**Next** – separate yourself from all of the attractions of this world, [**1 John 2:15-17**].

**Finally** – offer yourself to your Creator God and Saviour in believing faith. God will never turn away an honest, sincere person who has come to know the eternal value of atonement and the peace that is promised through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, [**Romans 12:1**].

God expects each of us to live in faith and victory over eternal death so that we may leave our Christian testimony to a new generation that undoubtedly needs it desperately.

*“These all died in faith”* the writer of Hebrews says.

When it is our time to end this physical existence, we will then be able to meet our Creator God on our judgement day knowing we have pleased Him.

### **God is the Faithful One.**

We are to love the Creator God and serve Him because He is God, **not** because of the gracious things He does for us or for the rewards He promises us.

Our motives must be both right and genuine, and the Creator God is well aware of our motives, [**Psalms 139:1-16**].

But God does **not** expect us to forget or ignore the gracious future promises He has made to those who worship and obey Him.

It is a glorious truth that if we believe God and honour His Word, the Christian Bible, if we walk by faith in love and obedience, there will be eternal rewards for each of us at the Second Coming of our Saviour and Lord.

The rewards will differ according to the natural abilities that we have been given at birth by God, this is shown in the kingdom parable of the talents.

**Matthew 25:14-30** [King James] *“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

The key to receiving a reward from Jesus Christ is how we used what ability we have to be a “*faithful servant.*”

Note the reward of the servants who doubled what they had been given was the same [**verses 21 and 23**], and the reward would bring them lasting joy.

The one who had only one talent had the wrong attitude, **not** that of a faithful, loving servant, and he was condemned by Jesus Christ, [**verse 30**].

**Luke 19:12-27** [King James] *“He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”*

In this kingdom parable we are shown that the reward will be a position of rulership.

Again the one who did **not** use what he had received was condemned by Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 25:31-46** [King James] *“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

This could be a parable for those who feel they have **no talents** to offer their Saviour Jesus Christ.

What they did to receive a reward at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ was the result of “*sheep*” who were following the example of the “*Great Shepherd*” [**John 10:11-16**] and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through them in acts of love, compassion, faithfulness.

**John 7:37-39** [NIV] *“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

The Holy Spirit **cannot** be stagnant in our lives, He must flow out of us in expressions of His very nature as listed in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

When we allow the Holy Spirit to actively work in us in this way we can be assured a future with the Creator God and Saviour Whom we love and obey.

**Ephesians 1:7-14** [NIV] *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfilment, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession, to the praise of his glory.”*

The active Holy Spirit in us is a guarantee of our future inheritance with Jesus Christ, [**Romans 8:16-17**].