

THE PATHFINDER

#333.21

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FAITH REPLETED

THE VICTORY

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" **1 Corinthians 15:55**.

From the dawn of that primordial age called *Death*, men have relentlessly searched with hopes of conquering its unyielding power. Over the centuries, more than a few have laid claim to having solved this dark mystery, only to fail like all those before them. The mysteries of both death and life have eluded humanity since the beginning of time. In grim defeat, their feeble efforts were carried with them to their appointed death. Today, like all the rest, they still heed the beckoning call of death's distant drums, as the rhythmic cadence beats out the name of every soul, perpetually calling each one unto itself. Isolated cases of men's programs that have promoted the thought of never dying may seem to have had merit, for awhile; but being slaves to sin themselves they also gave way to that which had dominion over them. They yielded helplessly to a foe that could not be conquered. In the face of that awful day of relinquishing their hold on life they clung to a vague hope that somehow, sometime in the ages to come, victory would be seen, that they might someday rise from mortality's choking dust and live again. In the face of failure, this has been their last bastion of hope.

THEY DIED IN FAITH

There is a minority, however, in the ranks of humanity who recognize Jesus as having overcome death, which gives them a more sure expectation of eternal life. With Jesus as their hope, the average person is comfortable to remain in *faith* and die in it.

This is good to a degree, for it is better than those who have no hope or faith at all. But still, they too return to that element from whence they came, back to the dust of the earth. They are comfortable with this thought, because there is something to which they can fasten a fragment of *hope*, and *faith* is at least something they can do themselves, presumably. Their faith, however, may be the type that the carnal mind possesses. If it is, there is not enough power in it to move an ant hill, much less *the mountain of death*.

Genuine *faith comes by hearing the Word of God, the Word of the Anointing* as the older Greek manuscripts have it in **Romans 10:17**. Therefore, without hearing, their *presumed faith* will lead them nowhere but to the grave; for that type of faith is generated from the tomb of death, the bottomless pit called the carnal mind. When the body releases the spark of life that was planted in it for a season, and it will be released, the clod will return to the dust from which it was formed. Whatever comes from the dust of death will return back to it, dead. No amount of carnal inspiration will keep it alive. Adamic faith cannot sustain adamic clay. It never has and it never will.

Fortunately, not all faith is presumption, and the ones who enter this war against death and fall in battle are appeased somewhat in knowing they are not the first. *Even the patriarchs of old died in faith, having not received the promise of the glorious resurrection Life. Hebrews 11:39*. There is little wonder why they died in faith; for Jesus Christ was yet to come. They had no option. There was no choice in the matter. The curse of death had not been disannulled. They had to die *in faith*, and then wait for the promise. It was the only path for them to walk.

Those great men and women were tremendous witnesses in faith, even unto death; but now that the promise is come, *we are to lay aside all those witnesses that can so easily beset us. Hebrews 12:1*. We are not to trust in Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. We are not to place our confidence in those who lacked the promise, for in them there is no life to receive. We will fail if we look to them, for they are dead. They are good witnesses of faith, but not of Life. If our aim is upon them, we sin, we miss the mark of Life. We cannot look to those who are dead, even if they died in faith, for they did not receive the promise of glorified life. They were indeed faithful witnesses; but if we should put our trust in that great cloud wherein we are compassed, we shall also die — in faith and void of the promise. To carry the thought a little farther, the same thing will happen when we put our trust in today's cloud of witnesses. When our deliverance is dependent upon *God's men of faith for the hour*, regardless of their rich word, charisma, and demonstration of power, the sting of death remains.

THE END OF FAITH

Although most will die in faith with sin's deadly stinger embedded in their flesh, let us ask, is the grave absolutely necessary? We believe not: *Everyone is given a measure, a portion, a partial of faith. Romans 12:3, but when that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away with*, including faith. **1 Corinthians 13:10**. Such a thought, that faith may be abolished, can be unsettling to some — especially to those who live by faith, to those whose lives are founded on faith, to those who know nothing but faith; nonetheless, it shall go in due season, but the loss is good.

The Apostle Peter wrote this: **"Receiving THE END of your faith, even THE SALVATION of your souls." 1 Peter 1:9**. As long as faith is working, the salvation of our souls is beyond the horizon of reality. We can only believe for it; but when the end of our faith comes — praise God — we have it! There is no need to continue believing for it — it has arrived! An expectant mother ceases from her faith in having a baby when the baby is born. Likewise, the salvation, that is, complete deliverance of one's soul comes when that which is perfect comes.

This is that distant thing that the patriarchs of faith could not receive, for the Spirit had not been given. Deliverance from death was an impossibility. Only by faith could it be sought after. Their faith was such

that it was, no doubt, as our Lord spoke to our dear friend years ago, Mary Rose. *“Faith smells the fragrance when as yet there is no rose.”* The patriarchs smelled the sweet fragrance of life; but they could not lay hold of it. They had waited with great expectation for the *Rose of Sharon* to spread His unfolding pedals in them. And that Day dawned for after He said "It is finished!" The rose is still flowering! And we can hear a great rejoicing beyond the veil!

There are many things in our walk that are only in part, as Paul wrote in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. All those things which are in part are good and necessary for a season. They keep one's courage and expectation built up; but once the fulness comes, faith is no longer necessary. And has it not come? Yes! First, in the form of Christ's Spirit, and second in the manifestation of His Spirit. With most, however, it is *in a measure, as an earnest of our inheritance.* (***Ephesians 2:14***). With some the earnest may have been swallowed up by the fulness, depending on where one resides. Regardless of whether He is making Himself known to a small degree or in a large degree, He is still coming and so shall He continue until His coming is complete, ***until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His Glory (Ephesians 2:15)***. He will come until we see ***the end of our faith brought to completion in the full stature of perfection. (1 Peter 1:9, Ephesians 4:13)***.

If our vision is narrow and fixed upon the events and problems of the day, faith will be our portion; however, if we peer from the heights of the heavens from where we should be sitting — we can see the end from the beginning and lay hold of that which faith had inspired.

THE FINISHER OF FAITH

Our walk as new creatures in Christ begins with the faith that comes by *hearing the anointed Word of the Spirit*. When the Deep calls to the deep of our darkened souls, and we hear that call, then comes *faith*. Jesus starts it, He is the ***Beginning*** of faith, He is the ***Initiator*** of it, but this is not all. He is also the ***Finisher*** of it. *"Looking unto Jesus the AUTHOR and FINISHER of faith..."* (Hebrews 12:2).

Ah, *looking unto Jesus*, or more accurately — *looking into* (Grk. ***eis***) *Jesus, the Chief Leader and finisher of faith*. I have spoken and written more times than I can count that faith is ignited when we *hear the Word of the Anointing*, and this is true. But here we see that *looking INTO Jesus finishes our faith*.

Due to the extraordinary and meaningful visitation of Jesus to one of our family members, I have shared it more than once over the years to those of you on our mailing list as well and a number of others. Many of you remember that was our oldest grandson, Christopher Restaino, that when he was thirteen years old, Although, prior to that time, he had always thought it was great that his Mamaw and Papaw, along with his mother, Michelle, had deep-rooted lives in Christ — it simply was not for him. For that matter, as he told us, he was not even sure there was a God, since no one could prove His existence, and as a new teenager, spiritual matters did not fit into his curriculum. Nevertheless, something happened to him that he nor anyone else could have ever imagined.

While in Brownsville, Texas on a family vacation, he and his younger brother, Alex, were laying in bed talking. Alex was in the process of telling him something, and stopped abruptly in mid sentence, never finishing his thought, and didn't say another word the remainder of the night, at least, that is the way Christopher remembered it, while Alex said he continued on with whatever it was that he was talking about.

From what Christopher related, it seems to us that God closed his ears to the natural world, as his attention was drawn to the bedroom closet where he unexpectedly saw the face of Jesus staring at him. He was looking at Christopher with no distinguishable expression. He was just intently looking at him. Christopher said that the most profound thing he had ever experience took place as he peered ***into the eyes***

of Jesus. Although scared and confused, **he knew everything there was to know about God.** But at the same time he knew that he knew nothing about the God he did not believe existed. Although he could not explain it, **he knew all there was to know about God.** He also saw every person of all humanity and knew everything about each of them from the beginning to the end, including every good and evil thing that had ever been done in the entire world. At the end of all this, He heard these pronounced words: "**ALL IS WELL!**"

In his young mind, he could not grasp any of this; but he said that as long as he was looking **INTO the face of Jesus, he knew all things!** After an several minutes, Jesus withdrew Himself and was no longer seen.

I asked him to tell me what he knew about God, about us, about humanity, and more. Sadly, he said, "Papaw, as long I was looking into the face of Jesus, I can remember that I **KNEW ALL THINGS**; but I can not remember one thing that I saw and knew."

Can you see that this speaks so clear to what happens when we **look INTO Jesus, the Chief Leader and Finisher of our faith.** It brings us to the end of our faith. It opens the heavens and reveals the mysteries of God, even to a child, that no natural mind can conceive nor peer into.

Since Christopher was born with a nonfunctioning pituitary gland, and had seizures from the time he was three months old until his death due to his last seizure 19 years later. We do not know if he was nearing death and saw beyond the veil, or he was perhaps being shown what he would know at some time once he was called to pass through that veil.

Whatever it was, my spirit leaped when he related this visitation, and it was not because he is our grandson; but it opened to me how simple and true the revelation and manifestation of Christ is in anyone to whom He reveals Himself as they **look into Him.** Praise God!

Of course I am excited about how Jesus visited our grandson, and hopefully it is clear that what he saw while **looking into Jesus** speaks to us all.

Although Jesus may not be manifestly appearing in the *closets of most souls* the way He did with Christopher, they can certainly know that He is the author of their faith, and like Abraham and the other patriarchs, it is accounted to them for righteousness (**Romans 4:3-5**). This, however, is not the everlasting best. As long as faith for anything is present, **THE PROMISE has not been received.** Too many today believe faith is the finale of their life in Christ, not realizing the end of it can be known and possessed **HERE** and **NOW!**

Since He is not only the author of our faith, **THE FINISHER** of it as well, and He is, there is no reason to expect everything has to be reserved for tomorrow, or after we die. If we could see from His vantage point, from the height of the heavens, we would see that He **has ABOLISHED OUR FAITH by SWALLOWING IT IN LIFE.** If we cannot yet see this, which would hinder us from laying hold of it, then let us remain in the faith we have. However, for myself, I cannot remain forever satisfied in faith unfulfilled. There is too much of a yearning *to know all there is to know about God*; but my burning desire is **to walk in that knowing!** Although the inspiration and revelation are tremendous, they are exhilarating, but to simply live and walk with God is my heartbeat. That is what the inspiration and revelation of God's mysteries are designed to do, to carry us to that place of ever abiding and living in Him.

It is good to have the revelation that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. And it is true that all who put their trust in Him shall never perish. So we must start with this God-given faith; but the problem lies in forever **abiding** in it, *building a fence around it, homesteading it, and never receiving the promise.* As long as faith is all we have, we shall continue to perish, to die — *in faith.*

Faith is essential in every Christian's walk, *for without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)*; but faith is a means to the *End* — **it is not the *End***. After hope, **like a seed, faith is the beginning of one's new life in the Spirit. It is not the fruit, the purchased possession, for "Faith is the substance of things hoped for (expected), the evidence of things not seen."** *Hebrews 11:1*. Jesus did not die so we could possess faith alone, and then die in it, but so we could possess *Life* and live in its fulness.

Jesus was the *Author* of our faith; but that was only the beginning. In most believers He has not become the *Finisher*. When faith is finished, that for which we had faith has arrived, it is here. Once we possess it, there is then no need to believe for it any longer. From then on, rather than believing for an intangible thing, ***WE HAVE IT, WE EXPERIENCE IT, and WE KNOW IT!*** Again, ***looking INTO Jesus the Chief Leader and Finisher of Faith.***

WHAT IS GREATER THAN FAITH

For one, **knowing** is greater than faith; for **faith is merely the seed** of that which is to come, while **knowing is the fruit of faith**. Which would you prefer, to eat **an apple seed of faith** or **the apple of knowing experientially**? The answer is obvious.

The ***FAITH OF A MUSTARD SEED*** is good, but this is only the beginning of ***THE PROMISE OF A MOUNTAIN BEING REMOVED***. A grain of faith enables us to believe for something not yet seen, but when we can see it and hold it in our hands, faith ceases as it is replaced with possession. ***Possessing*** a thing promotes ***experience***, and with experience comes ***knowing***. ***KNOWING*** is the result of experiencing the mountain moving, or holding a freshly picked apple firmly in your hands and sinking your teeth into it. When you snap off a large bite, and its sweet juice fills your mouth, ***FAITH becomes a thing of the past, for reality has made itself KNOWN.***

Likewise, a green grape is good upon the vine, but it is better when it is fully ripe and can be plucked and eaten. It is much better yet when it is crushed and drank as our Lord's ***New Wine***. We speak of Christ from His beginning as our faith, and finally as our Life-giving drink.

There is ***FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE***, but the greatest of these is ***LOVE***, for without the ***EXPERIENCE of KNOWING***, it is impossible to love. Do you want to love God with all your heart? Then get to know Him, for it is the only way He can be loved, otherwise you are only loving an ideal, an imagination, a mental concept, but not a person to person experience. You must possess love to know it, and remember, ***God is Love***. Therefore, when you possess Christ in His fulness, you will fully love Him. Until then, the most you can do is to embrace the image of Him, at best, the seed of faith of Him. If you think your love for Him is great now, while you walk in faith, just wait until it is no longer faith, but the fulness of knowing Him.

Although the wholesome, living seed of Christ's faith sends its roots deep into our unseen earth, it will eventually grow to full stature, into a full-grown, manifested tree with much fruit. When it breaks forth into the light of day, bringing forth the abundance of its produce, the reality comes, and faith is abolished. When the knowing arrives, by experience, it always does away with the initial faith. This is the nature of things, of ***Knowing versus Faith***.

More than a century ago Andrew Jukes wrote:

"'He that believeth in Me shall never die' (John 9:26)...At first, still bound in sense, we can only receive the symbolic form of truth, as yet incapable of understanding its true meaning. Yet even thus 'faith cometh by hearing' (Romans 10:17). And this faith, feeble as it seems, like a root without beauty, **contains all that will in due time come forth from it.** For this faith is the

spring of life. And it is the life which gives us light. **Only as we live any life do we really and truly understand it....**Faith takes indeed before hand the future as a present possession, but **we can only know as we live the life....**We 'add to faith knowledge, and to knowledge love.' (2 Peter 1:5). Thus this knowledge is no result of intellectual power, or of any self-willed searching into the things of God...**All experience shows that the really enlightened man is not he who desires to know God's secrets, but rather he who simply seeks to live and walk with God,** and to do His will so far as it has been revealed to him....**Thus do we come to 'know the truth,' which is more than knowledge about the truth.** For there are more ways than one of knowing anything....**But we do not know anything perfectly until we have it....**So we do not really know the truth, till we have it in our very life, till in this divine conjunction, the life of understanding and the light understood, becomes one." ***The New Man, pgs. 114-117.***

Today our souls are being awakened to the Light of the Day of the Lord. It is more so with some than others, that the time has come to no longer wait for it in faith, but to open our eyes and embrace it, God willing.

Freedom from the curse through the liberty of life is the promise to all mankind, and to all creation. We may not see this in its complete form; but like the writer of Hebrews said, **WE SEE JESUS**, the Captain of our salvation (Hebrews 2:6-14). The process has been long in human standards of time. Even so, His Word is stirring now and being heard in His Body. The *end of our faith* is surely drawing nigh.

FAITH REPLETED

Jesus made quite a journey which gives us great expectation of the same. He traveled from the lower regions of death to the highest realm of life — from the confines of hell to transfigured glory, from the grave to the heavens. He was the foreshadow of our own journey from Adam's imperfection to His perfection. He was, and still is, *The Pathfinder*, of whom we find our life and eternal hope of glory; for as *He once descended into the lower parts of the earth that He might FILL UP (replete) all things (Ephesians 4:9-10)*, He descended again into the hell of each son that He might do the same in us. "I am with you, He said, but shall be **IN YOU.**" ***John 14:17.***

The last three and half years of Jesus' life was, no doubt, a foreshadow of what would happen upon coming into the world of every soul. During that short time He invaded every realm that was lacking life and light, and *He filled it up*. No place was too dark or too deep for Him. He first went to the mouth of the Dead Sea, and even among the tombs of the Gadarenes. He also descended into the **LAW**, the very thing that gave strength to **SIN**, and filled it with what was lacking. He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: **I am not come to destroy, but TO FULFILL.**" ***Matthew 5:17.*** The word **FULFILL** in the Greek is **PELROO** and means **TO MAKE REPLETE, TO CRAM, LEVEL UP, SATISFY**, i.e., **TO FILL TO THE BRIM WITH THAT WHICH IS LACKING**. There was something lacking in the Law — the Spirit of Life — which He supplied, filling it up, cramming it full. He satisfied its lack. In the nature of His Spirit was the fulness of the whole Law. Everything He did was according to *the Law*; but it was due to *who He was, by nature*, rather than having to do it as a result of the law dictating to Him. He did nothing that was contrary to the Law of Life, which in turn made it impossible for Him to break any of the laws that gave sin its strength.

Like the *Law*, the *faith* in which the patriarchs died was also lacking. Their faith was good, yet there was still something missing, and it was longing to be *satisfied*. It was the same thing that the law and everything else were lacking — **LIFE!** Their Faith was accounted to them for righteousness, but it was still void of *the Promise*. There was no Life to be found in it.

Jesus came and *fulfilled, repleted, filled up the Law*. He placed His Life into it. He then went away,

but came back very shortly in the form of the Holy Spirit and planted a small seed in His church called **Faith**. This was perfect, but like the law, it was also lacking, but not in the same way. It lacked in the sense of being infantile. It was not full-grown. It was not complete. It was hidden from view. It had no visible expression to speak of. It was so small that if Jesus had not quickened it in the womb of our souls, we ourselves could not have believed it.

Nevertheless, even in its lack, His faith has been within and growing, and we are now called to fill it up. Bluntly speaking, we are called in this hour to cram faith so full of Life until there is no more faith! Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could not **REPLETE IT, FILL IT, SATISFY IT**, or any other *IT*. Neither could any of the others who died in unfulfilled faith. But dear brethren of Christ, **WE CAN**, for we have what it takes, **WE HAVE THE PROMISE! We have Him who is Life!** We have Him who was the Author of our Faith! We have Him who caused that Faith to grow! And we have Him who is the Finisher of that Faith! Praise God, we have *the End* of our Faith, *the Abolisher* of that faith. **WE HAVE HIM!** This is that with which our Faith is filled — the substance of Christ Jesus Himself, the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And once the fulness of Him is come, then faith is no more. It becomes obsolete. Jesus was the **End of the Law**, and we are the **End of Faith** — *filling it to the brim with HIS LIFE!*

Until the repletion of this void comes to be, He will not be seen to any major degree in the world. In the same manner that the Spirit of Jesus was confined in the grave of His own flesh, so is our faith confined until we see the end of it. But at the end, we, along with creation, will see it together and rejoice; for He shall not remain unseen forever while in our grave clothes of death. He shall come forth after three days, swallowing up not only death, but faith also.

THE VICTORY

His wonderful words of promise that once echoed through the ages shall **no longer** be *prophetic*. They shall be *realities*. **No longer** will we live in faith with His words saying:

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction...." For those things He said that He would be doing, will have come to pass. "So when this corruptible **shall have** put on incorruption...Death is swallowed up in victory" **Hosea 13:14, 1 Corinthians 15:54.**

Those assuring promises will not be spoken as **future events** that are assigned to another day; but the lives of the Living ones shall shine as the Sun, declaring in regal splendor that: **"WE ARE** ransomed from the power of the grave; **WE ARE** redeemed from death: O death, **WE ARE** your plagues; O grave **WE ARE** your destruction. Corruption **HAS PUT ON** incorruption, death **IS** swallowed up in victory." And we shall triumphantly resound: **"O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO GAVE US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." 1 Corinthians 15:55-57.**

Praise God, there is Living Faith within the crust of our souls, and it is rising in maturity! Are you sensing that Life burning to the surface, preparing itself to shine into this darkened world? Can you hear *the Voice of the Son of God* knocking upon the door of your inner chambers — *wanting out*? Can you see that the hour is dawning wherein *no death, no hell, no grave, no sin, no sickness, no darkness, nor evil of any kind can hold you?* (**Romans 8:1-2**). Is it not becoming clear that *nothing in the realm of Adam has any claim upon you?* (**1 Corinthians 6:20**). Can you see that *sin no longer has dominion over you?* (**Romans 6:14**), *for you are now the purchased possession that abides in Him!* (**Ephesians 1:14**). You are His and His alone, and He is coming out! He is coming out of your earthy field that He bought! He is holding you high and lifted up, you, the pearl of great price for

every eye to see! No more shall victory be buried in this earth, no more shall hell grip your souls, no more shall the grave of Adam claim you, for Christ is rising victoriously in the midst of all your asylums of death.

And know this brethren, and never let it escape the Spirit of your minds, as the Lord spoke many years ago to our dear friend, **Dennis James**, so it is: "**WHERE I AM PERCEIVED, THERE IS NO HELL.**" Of a truth, where Christ Jesus is perceived there is *no hell*, there is *no death*, and there is *no grave*! All there is to know of God is known, and those dark powers are consumed at the coming of His brilliant Light!

What form of death can remain in the presence of such blazing glory? What can remain hidden when He who is Light descends into the lowest regions of our hell and rises out of it? What form of death can survive when He who is from above, and above all, invades that which is from beneath? And when His unquenchable fire burns until it reaches the extremities of our utmost carnal being, and in fusion breaks forth to the outer surface, what realm of sin and sickness can endure? Can the carnal will and weakness of combustible flesh withstand the sovereign will and power of His flaming fire? If it can, then man would be sovereign over God, the creature would be mightier than the Creator, darkness greater than Light, hate stronger than Love. If the will of man can stand against the will and power of the omnipotent God, then there would be no guarantee that Life will ever prevail over death, that the hidden things of hell will ever be seen, or that the captives in the grave will ever go free.

But we **KNOW HIM**, in Whom we have *had faith* and in Whom we *trust*, and He shall deliver us from the dominion of sin and the power of death, and the grave!

There was a time when we lived with the cruel stroke of death — but let us now declare with Paul: "**Death is swallowed up in victory. O DEATH WHERE IS THY STING? Thanks be to God, Who GAVE US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!**" **1 Corinthians 15:57.**

Therefore, dear brethren, we shall no longer heed the death march of the mournful fifes and then die; but rather, we will hear *the Voice of the Son of God* and live. Let us not **ABIDE IN FAITH and DIE**, but hopefully we can **EMBRACE THE PROMISE and LIVE!**

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