

QUESTION 30

WHAT IS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST?

RECEIVING AND RESTING ON HIM ALONE FOR SALVATION AS HE IS OFFERED TO US IN THE GOSPEL.

READ GALATIANS 2:15-21

Sometimes people describe faith as a leap in the dark. This implies that faith is placing your trust in something you know nothing about. That might be what the first ever parachuter did when he jumped out of an airplane with a piece of material strapped to his back. But that isn't what parachuters are doing nowadays. They have faith in their parachute because they know how to use them. They've read the instructions. They know that they're made by reputable companies, and they learn how to use them from experienced instructors. They trust that as they fall to the ground, one tug on a cord will release a parachute that will allow them to fall gently to the ground.

Faith is actually trust or confidence that is based on knowledge coming from evidence. It's not a leap in the dark. When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we are placing our trust in him because of all the evidence in Scripture that testifies to him as the Savior. He is the one whom God said he would send to save his people from their sins. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. A Christian is not just a person who simply believes in his or her head that Jesus is the Savior, but someone who, from the heart, is ready to say, "Here, Jesus. Here is my whole life. I am not trusting anything else to save me."

At this point in the letter, Paul is explaining what it means to be justified by faith. That simply means to be put back in a right relationship with God through faith alone, not by ever doing anything else. Paul is clearly arguing that the only way to be saved is by trusting in Jesus Christ. At the time when Paul was writing, and indeed now, people thought that you must keep laws in order to be made right with God. They believed that they had the power to save themselves if they lived in a certain way. But they were deluded; no one except Jesus has been able to keep God's law perfectly. Paul says that the only way to be justified is by acknowledging that we need Jesus in order to be saved, that we can't do it by ourselves. It is putting our full trust confidently in Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)