

Meditations on Rev. 14:12
(Fred Bischoff)

*Here is the patience of the saints:
here are they that keep
the commandments of God, and
the faith of Jesus.*

The faith of Jesus is no more our faith than the commandments of God are our commandments. God is the source of both the commandments and the faith, both the law and the gospel. He defines how we are designed to live (law), and provides the means for sinners to be righteous (faith). It is His law and His faith. We are absolutely dependent upon both.

We are told that God is love. Observe that this love that describes who He is, fulfills His law (Rom. 13:10). This love is also that which fuels His faith (Gal. 5:6). In other words, His love put into a descriptive list is His law, and His love put to work is His faith.

We grasp better His law than we do His faith. Both take spiritual eyesight, but it appears that we can see *what* is right and wrong more quickly than we can see *how* God makes a wrong man right. In this regard, faith is the victory, not the law. God does not transform the sinner by telling him the law, but by treating him in faith, by promising something he does not deserve, by seeing in him and hoping for him what is not yet developed. His faith thereby is that creative force that makes the very possibility of being something other than a sinner. Thus His faith is "the substance of thing hoped for" in the sinner. His faith is "the evidence of things not seen" yet in the sinner. (Heb. 11:1). He is "the author of faith" (Heb. 12:2). It is this faith alone that establishes the law. (Rom. 3:31).

My faith is nothing more or less than a simple response to His faith, just as my love can only be a response to His love (1 John 4:19). It is this heart response which allows Him to write His law in my heart (Heb. 8:10), and that activates that seed faith in my heart (Rom. 10: 10). And since His love reaches all, He has given to all this faith, His faith. (Rom. 12:3).

His faith that works by His love is most clearly seen in the great Gift He gave, Jesus Christ. What a love Gift! What a faith Gift! This Gift, in which all heaven was poured out, must captivate our imaginations and intellect, our emotions and motives. This is the subject we must contemplate, that must infuse our words and lives with its divine energies. What love, what faith, that would lead Him to give Himself to us, to poor, wretched sinners! "Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! God sent His only begotten Son into the world to save the world! Amazing grace!" (1888, p. 570).

In Jesus we see embodied not only the faith of God working by love, but we also see the fulfilling of the law by love. The selfless life given in service for others for God's glory magnified the law and made it honorable. (Isa. 42:21). Each precept of the law was infused with that love that is its core. Each of the 10 promises were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Thus the new covenant, the salvation promises of God to a fallen race, were

wrapped up in the very life of Jesus Christ, poured out for each and every sinner. (Luke 22:20).

All of these were God's gift to us in Jesus Christ. The commandments and the faith provide for lost sinners the way back to their true identity. Both the *what* and the *how* are given in these gifts. They are like the Father speaking to the Son, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." They provide identity and acceptance, both of which are absolutely essential *before* victory, in fact, enabling it.

These two gifts in Christ are the everlasting gospel embodying His law. It is thus those who *keep* these are enabled to *endure* the hour of His judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the mark of the beast.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. ... Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. 5:12, 13).