

Wasted Faith Discussion Guide

Chapter 2

Faith Without the Spirit

1. Romans 3:11 says “There is none who seeks after God.” Hebrews 11:6, on the other hand, says that God “is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” How would you explain the apparent difference in the use of the word “seek(s)” in these two verses?

2. Read chapter 2 in **Wasted Faith** aloud: “Faith Without the Spirit,” (pp. 11-15).

3. Do you believe that faith causes God to save? Why nor why not? After discussing this, please read Acts 13:48 and relate that verse to your answer. Based on this verse, describe what part faith plays in the salvation experience.

4. In our man-centered day we often make God out to be our errand boy, doing our bidding whenever we ask. But salvation is something much more of God and much more mysterious than that. Because of our limited view, we fail to glorify God for salvation as we should. Consider the activity of God in salvation, reading and discussing the Scripture passages listed below.

[Leader: Have everyone look up each verse.]

- **God the Father elects (or chooses) those who will be saved.** It is OK if you do not yet understand this fully, but the concept is often repeated in the Bible (see Matt. 11:27; John 6:37, 44; 15:16-19; 17:1-2; Rom. 9:9-24; Eph. 1:3-6; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; Note the word “appointed” in Acts 13:48 and 1 Peter 2:8).
- **God the Son redeems those who will be saved.** This was accomplished at the cross, not potentially, but fully (Is. 53:11; Matt. 1:21; Rom. 5:10; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 2:24).
- **God the Spirit applies that redemption.** The Spirit is the agent of the Father and the Son. Even though He is not always mentioned by name, He is the One who applies redemption by convicting a person of sin (John 16:8); drawing him to Christ (John 6:44); opening the heart (Acts 16:14); revealing Christ (Matt. 11:27; 2 Cor. 4:3-6); regenerating or bringing the spiritually dead person to life (Eph. 2:4-5; Titus 3:5); and granting him repentance and faith (2 Tim. 2:24-26; Acts 11:18).

a. What are the benefits in knowing the truths I have just stated? If you think they are not that important, explain why.

b. How does the above truth affect your understanding of “grace”?

5. Read John 1:11-13 and then read the following comments. Three important points are being made by John:

a. *Being a child of God involves receiving Christ.* This does not mean to “invite Christ into your life,” however. In verse 11 and the whole context, you can see that it means to acknowledge Christ for Who He is, the divine Son of God Who has come to save. Also read John 13:20 where the word “receive” is used in a similar way.

b. *Being God’s child involves believing in His Name.* To believe in the name of Christ is to believe in Christ Himself. Only believing people are children of God. Salvation is by faith in Christ.

c. *Being a child of God presupposes a spiritual birth.*

- Believers are not born of blood—that is, natural birth.
- Believers are not born of the will of the flesh—that is, of their own human will.
- Believers are not born of the will of man—likely meaning the will of another.
- Believers are born of God!

6. Is every person naturally *able* to repent and believe? (Read and discuss John 3:3; 19-20; 6:44; Romans 8:6-8, 1 Corinthians 2:14, and Jeremiah 13:23. Note: The “natural man,” the “carnal” person, or the one who is “of the flesh” are all biblical descriptions of the person who has not been born again.)

7. For those of you who are believers already, how were the truths in this chapter experienced in your own conversion? Were you seeking God, or was He seeking you?

8. If you have time remaining, read chapter 3 in **Wasted Faith**, “Faith Without Christ” (pp. 17-21). End your time with prayer.

Before the next meeting: Read chapter 3 in **Wasted Faith**, “Faith Without Christ,” on your own (pp. 17-21).

Copyright © 2005 Jim Elliff.

Permission granted for electronic reproduction in exact form.

All other uses require written permission.

www.CCWtoday.org