

Faith in the Word

By Linda Rex

March 9, 2025, 1st Sunday in Preparation for Easter or Lent—Often our daily tasks arise out of a simple faith and trust that things are the way they are supposed to be, that people have done what they are supposed to do. Think about how often we do things in our everyday lives which involve faith in others or faith in things that others or ourselves have made. That daily dose of vitamins—who made it? Is it really safe for me to take? Does it really have the nutritional value it says it does?

Last time we talked about Jesus' transfiguration, and the hidden glory we have as those who are made in God's image and redeemed by our Lord Jesus. In spite of our best human efforts to live in the truth of who we are in Christ, we so often fail. We cannot trust in ourselves, for we are untrustworthy and undependable when it comes to our walk of faith.

On Ash Wednesday, which in 2025 is celebrated on March 5th, we begin the season of preparation for Easter. As we look forward to the events of Holy Week, we contemplate the reality of our need for Jesus' redemptive work. In this season, we do not need to grovel or lament our wickedness, but rather, assume a clearheaded, frank assessment of how far we have fallen from all that God meant us to be as those who were created to be image-bearers of the Triune God. At the same time, we rest in Jesus' redemptive work, which we look forward to celebrating during Holy Week. And we seek to open ourselves more fully to the Spirit's work in us and our world.

Our New Testament passage for the first Sunday in this season is Romans 10:8–13. In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul examines the human condition and sums this up by saying that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We all, no matter our religious or cultural background, need salvation and redemption. We all need transformed, healed, and made whole. This is why Jesus came, to live our human life, die our human death, and rise again. And this is why Jesus sent the Spirit from the Father. The Spirit gives us all the graces of Jesus, the perfect human, so that we may live in right relationship with God and one another.

When we look at the human experience since the beginning of time through God's eyes, we see that he has been reaching out to us and speaking to us in everyway possible. He has sought to tell us about and to show us his love. The divine Father, Son, and Spirit have spoken of their love and grace to us in many ways, including the glory of a double rainbow, spectacular sunsets, and the majesty of star-studded nebulae. But it is hard as humans to hear the voice of our God, for he doesn't seem to speak our language.

In Hebrews 1:1–3, the author points out that God finally spoke to all of us through his Son, the One who is the exact representation of his nature—his true self. Jesus Christ is God's final word to all of us as human beings. The apostle John uses the term "the Word" to describe Jesus in his divinity, long before he ever took on our humanity (John 1:1). Jesus, the Word of God, the wisdom of God—how profound is the realization that God would step into our world in the person of Jesus Christ to join us in our darkness, in order to bring us up into his divine light! Does this resonate in our soul? Do we hear God's divine Word to us within? The Spirit resonates with our spirit, as the life of Christ within us, and enables us to hear the Word of our heavenly Father's love and respond with Jesus' own "Abba, Father."

It is possible to read the Bible, hear the gospel stories, and memorize a zillion scriptures and still struggle to put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We may say that we believe in God, some sort of God—but do we believe this God cares enough about you and me and this crazy old world? More devotionals may be found at <https://lifeinthetrinity.blog>

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that he would actually join us in our broken sinful flesh, becoming sin for us, so that we may become like him in his righteousness? Have we woken up to the spiritual reality of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is the presence of the living Word, Jesus Christ, who lives in us?

When the Word of God, Jesus Christ, reveals himself to us by his Holy Spirit, we are never the same again. God's Word to us about who we are, as the beloved children of our heavenly Father, and his Word to us about how we are to live, is written in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Faith, then becomes real, substantial, and life-changing, as we respond to and trust in this living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, who lives in us by the Spirit. As we hear and respond to the inner direction of the Spirit, that living Word who dwells within, we are transformed and healed. And as we allow that living Word to move, guide, and direct us, our world is changed for the better.

Heavenly Father, Jesus, Spirit, thank you for all you have done to bring us up into life with you in the Spirit. Forgive us for refusing to believe or trust in you, for closing our hearts to your Spirit. Please remove our deafness and enable us to hear your Word, and to respond to your love and grace with faithful obedience in Jesus' name. Amen.

"But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart'—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, 'whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for 'whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' "
Romans 10:8–13 NASB

"Faith-righteousness announces that every definition of distance in time, space, or hostility has been cancelled. Faith says, 'The Word is near you. It is as close to you as your voice and the conviction of your heart.' We publicly announce this message. Now your salvation is realized! Your own words echo God's voice. The unveiling of the masterful act of Jesus forms the words in your mouth, inspired by the conviction in your heart that God indeed raised him from the dead. Heart-faith confirms the fact of mankind's righteousness and ignites the kind of conversation consistent with salvation. Scripture declares that whosoever believes in Christ will not be ashamed to announce it. Nothing distinguishes the Jew from the Greek when it comes to the generosity of God. He responds with equal benevolence to everyone who sees themselves identified in him. Salvation is to understand that every person's true identity is revealed in Christ." Romans 10:8–13 Mirror Bible