

EVERY TRACK EVERY WEEK
WEEK 18: Leader Study Guide

True Faith

-Welcome!

-Intro: Thanks for being here! Revisit last week's points

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INTRO:

Hi, and welcome to Every Track Every Week. My name is _____ and I am involved with Texas FCA Motocross through _____. I've been involved with FCA MX for _____ years and my favorite thing about the ministry is _____.

This week's discussion is based upon episode #92 of our podcast "The Gospel Driven Athlete" titled, "True Faith." This week we will discuss what true faith really is. Is true faith simply believing that there is a God? Is it believing that Jesus was a real person in history? ...is it something we invest in or work for? For example, if I train and exercise daily, I have faith I will finish well in the next race. Or if I maintain my bike, I have faith the bike will perform well in the up-coming race. Is true faith like this? While these are certainly worthy investments, this week we will look at "true faith" that leads us to a relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

-Ice Breaker Question: If I believe... like really really believe... that I can fly by simply flapping my arms really hard, will I take off?

-Of course not! If I believe in myself and my ability to fly, over the laws of physics, it does me no good. I'm believing in the wrong thing, and not believing in the right thing.

-Question 1: How is faith perceived in our culture?

***Answer:**

1) Faith tends to be a very popular buzzword for Christians and many times even non-Christians. People say things like "you just have to have faith." Further faith has been caricatured to mean whether or not one believes in God.



2) Faith is often diminished to simply mean “I believe in God”, and while this is important, simply believing “in” God is not enough for salvation. The bible says that “even the demons believe in God, and they shudder...”.

3) Oftentimes, faith is used synonymously with “self-confidence”... one will say “just have faith (in yourself)”... While this self-confidence is important for sports and our ability to perform, it does nothing to save us. Our faith has to be directed in the right direction- towards Christ, in order to be true saving faith.

-Question 2: What does scripture say about faith?

***ANSWER:**

1) When we talk about the Bible, it is holistically a narrative about God redeeming mankind through the seed of Adam- Jesus Christ. Faith, from the beginning to the end of scripture, comes back to resting and believing in this promise. The Old Testament saints were saved by believing God at his word and looking forward to the promised seed (found in Genesis 3) that would redeem mankind. Now that Christ (who was this promised seed) has come, we are saved by looking back to Him and to what He accomplished on our behalf.

2) In chapter 14, the Westminster confession of faith says, “But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”

3) So, true faith then, is receiving and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life. A key part is the end that says, “by virtue of the covenant of grace.” You can’t miss this because this is a key element to understanding what faith really is. When the confession refers to the covenant of grace, it is referring back to the unilateral (one-way) promise made by God to Abraham. It was a one way promise that God would accomplish what He promised and that He would provide the seed that would restore you to me. True faith looks completely to God’s provision in the person and work of Jesus Christ for right standing and rest with God.

4)The Westminster goes further, in 14.3, “This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory: growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.”



5) Not everyone's faith is in the same spot. However, true faith (saving faith) has one thing in common- **its object is the person and work of Jesus Christ.** Arbitrary faith in God does not save. Simply believing "in God" does not save. True, saving faith must be grounded in... directed towards... the person and work of Jesus Christ alone. If Christ is not the object of our faith, we are still dead in our sins.

Question 3: Where does faith come from?

***ANSWER:**

1) "So then faith comes from hearing and hearing through the Word of Christ" Romans 10:17. The bible says that faith comes from, and is grown by, hearing the Word of Christ (the Gospel). The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1:16), and Eph 3 makes it clear that faith itself is a gift from God. So, God gives us faith, through the ordinary means of hearing the gospel proclaimed.

2) The Westminster puts it this way in 14.1, "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened."

3) If you feel like you lack faith, or you are simply wondering where it comes from, faith first of comes from the spirit of God. But more specifically faith comes through ordinary means. Not mystical means. By the ordinary preaching of the word of God and more specifically the Gospel, and the sacraments which preach the gospel as well as prayer, faith is increased and strengthened. Those are the ways that God has promised to provide faith.

-Question 4: How can you be sure you are saved?

ANSWER:

1) Assurance is grounded primarily in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Do you believe that he is the promised fulfillment of God? Do you believe that he lived sinlessly and accomplished what Adam did not? Do you believe that He took his perfection to a bloody cross where he bore your shame and gave his righteousness to all that believe? Do you believe that he was buried and was resurrected to life? If you do, then you can be sure that you are saved. Even a tiny amount of faith in the person and work of Christ is enough to take hold of the



promises of God. It is not the strength of our faith that saves us, it is the object of our faith- Jesus Christ- that saves us.

2) Most importantly do you believe this work was necessary to save you from your sins and moral shortcomings? If you are confident that your only hope is Jesus Christ and you desperately need God's mercy to be accepted, that is a good start and is a major distinction from someone who looks inside to be justified vs. looking outside to Jesus.

3) The Westminster Confession of faith says, in ch14.2 "When one is resting in these promises, the spirit of God produces true faith and that results in a Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acts differently upon that which each particular passage thereof contains; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace."

-Question 5: How should these facts drive our attitudes, our actions and our lives?

ANSWER:

1) Faith is simple but is not easy. A Christian was once dead spiritually but God commanded that dead spirit to rise and walk to Him.

2) Faith itself is a gift of God and those that have any amount of it should realize that they did not create this, but God gave it to them. We should press into God for more of it through corporate worship where the word is preached, and the sacraments are given. It is also gifted through prayer and simply asking.

3) In gathering with God's people, we will be strengthened in faith and be reminded that our hope is not of this world, but that we look for the world to come where the one we have placed our faith will judge the living and the dead and come to make all things new.

-Lets pray.

