

also said:] “Love your neighbor as yourself.”
[Then He concluded by saying:] There is no
commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:30-
31 NIV) *They inform our active faith!*

b. Pages 188-190:

i. **Passive Faith makes me identical to others** – The Bible says: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28 NIV)

Active Faith makes me different from others – The Bible says: “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.” (1Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV)

ii. **Passive Faith** – I have *heaven in view* – I know Jesus as my Savior, so I know God will welcome me into heaven through Jesus whenever the time comes!

iii. **Active Faith** – I have *this world in view* – I look at my nation, my church, my neighbors, my brothers and sisters-in-Christ; then I care, I pray, and I take action to make a positive difference!

Conclusion: **Passive Faith** – God’s action to save us in Jesus!
Active Faith – us taking action to love others! Since God has loved us in Christ, let us take action to show love for others!
And all God’s people said: Amen!

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The Biblical Relationship between Faith and Works – Part 3

Passive Faith; Then Active Faith!

Knowing the Difference is Important!

Based on Selected Passages in Ephesians NIV and
The Fire and the Staff, Chapters 2 & 6

9th Sunday after Pentecost, 8th Sunday after Trinity – 2010

Sunday July 25 at 9:00 † Monday July 26 † 7:00

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, so far in this series we have focused on **FAITH** – *how people get to heaven*, and **WORKS** – *the evidence of our faith!* Today we turn our attention to some unfamiliar terms: “**Passive Faith**” and “**Active Faith**.” When God enables you to understand what they mean; *then you will better understand the Biblical relationship between faith and works!*

1. **The Book of Ephesians – a Good Example of PASSIVE faith; then ACTIVE faith:**

a. In the first half of the book, chapters 1-3, people were passive – even dead in their sins, so **GOD DID EVERYTHING** to enable them to receive Jesus as their Savior! Here are some examples: **1:3** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he [the Father] chose us in him [the Son] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he [F] predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ... ⁷ In him [S] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins... **2:3** ...Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have

been saved.... **3:12** In [Christ] and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Passive faith is *GOD enabling a person to receive Jesus*; the person does nothing, *GOD DOES EVERYTHING!*

- b. In the second half of Ephesians, chapters 4-6, Christians are told how to *ACTIVELY LIVE-OUT THEIR FAITH!* Here are some examples: **4:1** ...I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.... **4:25** ...each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor...²⁶ “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry...²⁸ He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. **5:1** Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us...³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.... **5:22** Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord....²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... **6:1** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right....⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Faith is *PASSIVE* when it comes to justification (*being just in God's sight*), but *ACTIVE* when it comes to sanctification (*living for Christ*)!

2. **The Fire and the Staff,¹ Chapters 2 & 6 – Understanding**

PASSIVE faith and ACTIVE faith: Author, Clemet Preus – an LCMS pastor in Minnesota – will help us understand the *faith – works relationship* as we examine some of his *PASSIVE FAITH* and *ACTIVE FAITH* statements:

a. Pages 72-77:

- i. **PF is everything** when it comes to *salvation* – *through Jesus alone I know I am saved!*
- ii. **AF is nothing** when it comes to *salvation* – *doing good deeds or helping others contributes nothing, zero toward my entrance into heaven!*
- iii. **Passive Faith is in God's doctrine** – *God gave us passive faith, which both united us to Jesus and enables us to know that His teachings are true!*
Active Faith is toward your neighbor's need – *From our passive faith comes our active faith which takes action to help our neighbors!*
- iv. **Passive Faith saves** – *it connects us to Jesus!*
Active Faith serves – *it identifies and responds to the needs of others!*
- v. **The Gospel informs Passive Faith** – *The Gospel is the good news! It tells me what Jesus has done to save me from my sins!*
The Law informs Active Faith – *The Law tells me what to do to live my Christian life! This is a good summary; Jesus said: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”³¹ [Jesus*

¹ Klemet I. Preus, The Fire and the Staff (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004).