

Faith in Men

By: Daniel Orona

One of the greatest pitfalls, particularly to new believers, is when a minister they hold in high regard or have trusted or even one that they came to Christ through falls. When I say falls, I mean makes a mistake or sins a sin that causes them to have to repent before the Lord. Unfortunately, this happens often because all ministers are simply men and women who are fallible and make mistakes just like every other believer. The problem comes in that often this causes new believers to question their own selves. The ministers have been built up and put on a pedestal because of how Godly or Holy they were in the sight of the public. The fact remains that while we are all believers, while we are in this flesh the possibility of sin is ever present. Paul said in Romans 7:21-23, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

It's for this reason that we should never put all our faith and trust in a man or woman no matter how holy or righteous that we may think they are. What we actually do when we do that is we place an idol in the place of Christ. Christ must be first, and our relationship should be between Him and ourselves. He is the mediator of the new covenant and through Him we go to the Father. When we begin to praise others and put them in that place in our heart, this is when we build an idol that we will eventually see fall and not live up to expectations we have because they are flesh. In Deuteronomy 4:23-24 the Bible says, "Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of anything, which the Lord they God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord they God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God."

Deuteronomy 29:14-17 says, "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but with him that stands here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day: (for ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which you passed by; and you have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them:). I bring this verse up because when we place people in the place of Christ in our relationship, we make our own idols. They are fallible man, wood and stone, overlaid with gold and silver, representing putting God on top of our justification. It's true a preacher can be passionate, charismatic and attract a great number to them by the teachings they do. However, that teaching needs to be based in Scripture and not in what that minister feels is correct. It's for this reason that whoever is teaching should be held to account and even more so we should be guarded in our own spirits with whatever and whoever is teaching. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:14-15, "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

It's for this reason that we need to study for ourselves and not take a minister's word for any teaching. This then shields us from putting them in a position higher than Christ. I don't care who the person is. It's imperative that we guard ourselves with sound teaching that is based in Scripture. I've often said that we all need a mentor to help us in our journey. Even that mentor should not take the place of Christ in our hearts and should be checked. We must put in the work on our relationship with Christ and in the Scripture. Diving into Scripture and praying will allow the Holy Spirit to teach you and move on you and bring you to the next level along with the aid of the mentor who is mature spiritually.

I'm not saying not trust others or your brothers and sisters in Christ. We do rely on each other as a body fit jointly together. We all have a role to play as Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 12. But it is important

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to foster your own relationship and do your own homework than to fully rely on others. When we full rely on others that leaves us in a tenuous position. What if that person is not teaching Christ or Scripture correctly? What if they fall and don't live the same life that they portray in public? All of these become stumbling blocks for the people that rely on those ministers blindly without putting in the work to understand what God really has for each individual.

At the end of the day, we must put our faith in Christ and not in man. Yes, there will be people who will teach us and people that we can learn from, but we should understand they are fallible human beings with flesh that they must overcome just like we have to. When they fall, we should not let them be a stumbling block to us, but we should also look to offer forgiveness and restoration the same way that Christ has offered that to us. Remember it is your relationship with Christ not theirs. You must foster I and must put in the work with Christ and the Holy Spirit to develop it.