

# Walking by Faith or by Sight?

2 Corinthians 5:4-7

Introduction: Pleasing God ought to be our heart's main desire. God has provided the means of our salvation. Christ has paid the penalty for our sins. What remains is whether we will obey His instructions. Yet, many people have failed to obey God because they don't walk by faith but by sight.

I. Paul addresses the proper prospective in life (2 Cor. 4:7-5:11).

A. What helps us make it through life when our efforts to please God are met with opposition and persecution? Why do we keep going when our bodies want to quit and stay in bed? Is it not faith (2 Cor. 4:16-18)?

B. By human reasoning, our obedience to God makes no sense. Even in the present religious world in which we live we are viewed as extreme. They can't believe; for example, that we won't use instruments in worship. But then again, "*we walk by faith, not by sight*" (2 Cor. 5:7).

II. Walking by sight is doing whatever is right in our own eyes.

A. Just before the children of Israel were to enter into the promise land, they were given a warning (Deut. 12:8-9).

1. They would no longer do whatever they want. They will praise God and they will obey Him. They will offer sacrifices to the Lord. They will tithe. They will present offerings to Him. They will do as they are told. They will not even be allowed to determine where or how worship will be conducted (Deut. 12:10-14).

2. It was a lesson that Nadab and Abihu had failed to understand (Lev. 10:1-2).

B. "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*" (Prov. 16:25).

III. Walking by sight is going along with whatever has popular approval.

A. Jesus upset that idea with His teachings on the wide and narrow gates (Matt. 7:13-14). There is no safety in numbers with God.

B. King Saul tried to go along with the crowd to his own demise (1 Sam. 15:19-23). He thought it was a good thing for the people to bring back animals for sacrifices. Surely God would approve... but He didn't!

IV. Walking by sight is following our own opinions or feelings.

A. Feelings and opinions produce many standards in religion. However, the only standard that matters is God's word (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12).

B. The Apostle Paul “lived in all good conscience” (Acts 23:1). Yet, he followed his feelings while he violently persecuted the church (Acts 26:9-11).

C. We all know how our feelings are unreliable.

1. How many people get married to a loser because they feel they can change after they are married?

2. Would anyone go to the medicine cabinet in the dark; just feel around for the right pills?

3. When we get bad news we feel sad whether the news was true or not.

4. The Jews felt they had killed Paul “*supposing him to be dead*” but they were wrong (Acts 14:19).

5. The Philippian jailor was about to kill himself “*supposing the prisoners had fled*” but he was wrong (Acts 16:27).

D. Many people put their emotions above the Bible and make them their standard of authority.

1. Some put their love for their relatives ahead of Christ (Matt. 10:37).

2. Some believe there is no Hell because they feel a loving God wouldn't punish people so harshly (Luke 12:4-5).

3. Some feel that all good people will be saved. Yet, not even all sincere and religious people will be saved (Matt. 7:21-23).

4. Some feel that one church is as good as another. Yet, the Lord says there is only one Church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4).

Conclusion: Faith comes by hearing God words (Rom. 10:17). Obedience to God's word is what walking by faith is all about.