



## An Orthodox Christian understanding of FAITH & WORKS

And just as tools without the workmen and the workmen without tools are unable to do anything, just so neither is faith without the fulfillment of the commandments, nor the fulfillment of the commandments without faith able to renew and recreate us, nor make us new men from the old. But, whenever we do possess both within a heart free of doubt, then we shall become the Master's vessels, be

made fit for the reception of the spiritual myrrh. Then, too, will He Who makes darkness His hiding-place renew us by the gift of the Holy Spirit and raise us up new instead of old, and part the veil of His darkness and carry our mind away and allow it to peek as through some narrow opening, and grant it to see Him, still somehow dimly, as one might look on the disk of the sun or moon. It is then that the mind is taught -- or, put better -- knows and is initiated, and is assumed that that truly in no other way does one arrive at even partial participation in the ineffable good things of God except by way of the heart's humility, unwavering faith, and the resolve of the whole soul to renounce all the world and everything in it, together with one's own will, in order to keep all of God's commandments. *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

As the memory of fire does not warm the body, so faith without love does not bring about the illumination of knowledge in the soul. *St. Maximus Confessor*

Faith and love which are gifts of the Holy Spirit are such great and powerful means that a person who has them can easily, and with joy and consolation, go the way Jesus Christ went. Besides this, the Holy Spirit gives man the power to resist the delusions of the world so that although he makes use of earthly good, yet he uses them as a temporary visitor, without attaching his heart to them. But a man who has not got the Holy Spirit, despite all his learning and prudence, is always more or less a slave and worshipper of the world.

*St. Innocent of Irkutsk, Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven*

If we desire to acquire faith the foundation of all blessings, the door to God's mysteries, unflagging defeat of our enemies, the most necessary of all the virtues, the wings of prayer and the dwelling of God within the soul--we must endure every trial imposed by our enemies and by our many and various thoughts....if we forcibly triumph over the trials and temptations that befall us, it will not be we who are victorious, but Christ, Who is present in us through faith.

*St. Peter of Damaskos*