

Faith and Love — Week 3

By Midge Vice, Auburndale, Florida

(Midge is the author of "Let the Older Women Teach.")

"Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:16-18).

Years ago, long enough after I had been saved to allow for it to be possible, I entered into a dark period of questioning this whole Christianity thing I had gotten caught up in. It was a very special time in the little town we lived in with a move of the Holy Spirit in some of the churches causing a certain amount of controversy and upheaval. The devil tried to convince me it was all a bunch of hokey. We had just worked all this up in our own minds. My inner healing had been so great, there was no way the Enemy could make me question earlier, but I had finally gotten my eyes off Jesus and onto man, which will make even the strongest believer doubt.

One morning, Mom Brooks, my spiritual mother who was so instrumental in my salvation, called me. "God gave me the words 'faith motivated by love' and the scripture Galatians 5:6." She didn't know who it was for, but thought of me. She explained that wasn't exactly like it was in the Bible, but it was the way God said it to her. We didn't talk long, which wasn't unusual for her. I got my big family Bible and went to the living room to read and study the scripture: *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love* (Galatians 5:6).

Say what? I have to admit, it went right over my head. Let me try Mom Brooks' version: "faith motivated by love." That didn't help much, so I decided to go slower. "Let's take it word by word." Faith . . . whose faith? I assumed it meant my faith. Motivated? What does motivated mean? I didn't take time to look it up and thought: moved by . . . my faith is moved by love. Whose love? God's love. My love. Our love relationship. My faith is moved by love: His love for me and my love for Him, our love for each other.

After saying this a few times, I suddenly saw that it was saying that my faith would be moved by, or developed by, God's love for me and my love for Him. Because He loves me, He will do something and that will grow my faith. And then these words came to my mind: **STAND ON YOUR LOVE, NOT YOUR FAITH.** My faith was wavering. God didn't want me to stand on something that was wavering. My faith might waver, but our love never will. Well, His won't. And mine might not be perfect and I will surely make mistakes, but not because I don't love Him. I may not be perfect in expressing my love through my actions or obedience, but I do love Him and I can't imagine losing that.

Oh, heavenly Father, how faithful and loving You are. You are always surprising me with the most outrageous, spontaneous blessings. You are more than my Comforter and Guide in this life I call mine. You are my very breath and laughter. Any joy that I have is from Your hand. I am so blessed. Even in the struggles and battles we face, You make them not only bearable, but in the end a blessing I could never have imagined. You turn even my enemies to be my friends. All I can do is rest in your grace-filled and loving arms. You make life worth living for You are life itself. And love. Always love. I stand in such awe of You.