

# *Foundations*

*Of*

# *Faith*

## *Student Notes*

*Bible College Study Course.*

***Foundations Of Faith***

*Copyright © 2022 Roshan Seneviratne*

*Full Life Global Ministries*

*24 Monarch Place*

*Quakers Hill. NSW. 2763*

*AUSTRALIA*

# CHAPTER INDEX

## Chapter 1    What Faith Is

§ *Subject Overview*

§ *The Importance Of Faith*

§ *The Blessings Of God Received ‘By Faith’*

§ *Faith Is Not A Feeling*

§ *Faith Is (Objectively) Substance*

§ *Faith Is (Subjectively) Assurance*

## Chapter 2    Where Faith Comes From

§ *Mark 11:22 As The Faith ‘Of’ God*

§ *Receiving God’s Faith*

§ *Mark 11:22 As Faith ‘In’ God*

§ *Different Levels Of Faith*

§ *We Can Increase In Faith*

§ *The Triune Nature Of Man (Spirit, Soul & Body)*

§ *How We Increase Our Faith*

## **Chapter 3      How Faith Works (Corresponding Action)**

§ *The Basis For Faith*

§ *The Voice Of Faith*

§ *How 'Faith In God' Works*

§ *The 'Logos' & 'Rhema' Of God*

§ *How 'The Faith Of God' Works*

§ *What We Need To Know*

§ *'First Steps...'*

## **Chapter 4      The Enemies Of Faith**

§ *The Fight Of Faith*

§ *The Enemy Of Unforgiveness*

§ *The Enemy Of Unbelief*

§ *The Enemy Of Doubt*

§ *The Enemy Of Fear*

## **Chapter 5      The Life Of Faith (*The Life That Pleases God*)**

§ *Living By Faith*

§ *The Faith Of David (A Man After God's Own Heart)*

§ *The Faith Of Abraham (The Father Of Faith)*

§ *The Faith Of Daniel (A Man Of Exceptional Qualities)*

§ *The Heroes Of Faith (Of Hebrews 11)*

# CHAPTER 1



## *What Faith Is*

### INTRODUCTION & SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Hebrews 11:6 says that ‘*without faith it is impossible to please God*’. That lets us know that faith is of the *utmost importance*, not only to our *everyday life*, but also to anyone *called into ministry* as well.

It is *faith*, and *faith alone*, that *allows us to fellowship with God, pray effectively, receive wisdom and forgiveness from God, live a fearless, overcoming life, walk in love, access the promises of God*, and so on; And why this series has been *classified* as a *Core Subject*<sup>1</sup>.

From an *overall perspective*, we will be looking at ‘*What Faith Is*’, ‘*Where Faith Comes From*’, ‘*How Faith Works*’, ‘*The Enemies Of Faith*’, and ‘*The Life Of Faith*’.

In chapter 1, ‘*What Faith Is*’, we will talk about ‘*The Importance Of Faith*’; The fact that ‘*Faith Is Not A Feeling*’, And look at ‘*faith*’ as both a ‘*Substance*’ and an ‘*Assurance*’.

In chapter 2, ‘*Where Faith Comes From*’, we will be looking at ‘*The Faith Of God*’, ‘*Having Faith In God*’, the ‘*Different Levels Of Faith*’, and much more.

In chapter 3, on ‘*How Faith Works*’, we will talk about what ‘*The Basis For Faith*’ is, what ‘*The Voice Of Faith*’ is, ‘*How Faith ‘In’ God Works*’, ‘*How The Faith ‘Of’ God Works*’, and more.

In chapter 4, ‘*The Enemies Of Faith*,’ we will go on to look at all things that can get in the way of our faith, such unforgiveness, unbelief, doubt, and of course, fear.

---

<sup>1</sup> As opposed to ELECTIVES such as the Epistle of John, Youth Leadership Training, Praise & Worship, and so on.

In chapter 5, ‘*The Life Of Faith*’, we will see how all this comes together and works in the life of some very powerful Bible Characters, such as David, Abraham, and Daniel.

## § THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Regardless of our vocation in life, the study of ‘*faith*’ is *crucial* to each and every one of us.

In our studies , we will highlight two main purposes of faith.

Firstly it is the one thing that *accesses* everything God and His Word promises us.  
Secondly, but of *more importance* is the fact that without faith , it is *impossible* to please God.

**Heb 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please Him [that is, God], for he who comes to God must believe that He is [or that, ‘He exists’]<sup>NKJV</sup>, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

This verse is tied to the previous verse which says...

**Heb 11:5** *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

R. Kent Hughes: “Enoch was a man of *immense age* and *character*, but he is most famous for *the incredible thing that happened to him*, as described in the Genesis account: ‘And *Enoch walked with God*; and he was not, for *God took him*’ (Gen. 5:24). *God* (‘*took*’ or) *translated him* to be with Himself *without going through death.*”<sup>1</sup>

Everyone *before Enoch* and *after Enoch* is said to have ‘*died*’. Enoch did not die, but was instead ‘*translated*’ because he ‘*walked with God*’.

Comparing Genesis 5:24 with Hebrews 11:5, we find that ‘*walking with God*’ and ‘*pleasing God*’ are *the same thing*.

When you ‘*walk with God*’ you ‘*please Him*’; And *conversely*, you automatically ‘*please God*’ when ever you ‘*walk with Him*’. Hebrews 11:6 says that *you must have ‘faith’* to do any of it, because ‘*God is Spirit*’ (John 4:24<sup>2</sup>), and therefore, ‘*invisible to the naked eye*’.

R. Kent Hughes: “*Faith and pleasing God are but opposite sides of the same coin...*”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.76

<sup>2</sup> John 4:24 “*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*”<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>3</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.77

It becomes apparent that Enoch's primary characteristic," was faith.<sup>1</sup> We now see that faith and a righteous walk with God are inseparably joined together.

Enoch believed in the existence of God so much so, that he went out of his way to 'seek God', and 'walk with God', and 'please God'. As a 'reward', God invited Enoch back to His place, and Enoch just kept going until 'he was not'!

R. Kent Hughes: "Enoch resisted the sinful gravity of his culture (as brought out in Genesis 6, verses 11 through 13<sup>2</sup>) and walked with God for over 300 years! He set his goal on the city of God – God's place; so he walked the same path – striding in step with God's pace. Three hundred years of faithfulness!...because he believed that God 'rewards those who earnestly seek Him'".<sup>3</sup>

That explains Hebrews 11:6...

**Heb 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

The same way that God 'rewarded' Enoch, God also promises to uniquely 'reward' each and every one of us. we are willing to do the same thing Enoch did. We must have 'faith' in God, in order to 'please Him'.

R. Kent Hughes: "Notice that he does not say that 'without faith it is difficult to please God', or 'without faith you will have to work extra-hard to please God'. He says categorically that it is impossible!".<sup>4</sup>

William MacDonald: "No amount of good works can compensate for lack of faith. After all is said and done, when a man refuses to believe God, he is calling Him a liar. [1<sup>st</sup> John 5:10 says] 'He who does not believe God has made Him a liar', and how can God be pleased by people who call Him a liar? Faith is the only thing that gives God His proper place, and puts man in his place too."<sup>5</sup>

Faith demands we believe certain things. Firstly, 'we must believe that He is'. This means several things:

1. That God does exist!

John MacArthur states: "Genuine faith does not simply believe that a divine being exists, but that the God of Scripture is the only real and true God who exists."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.78

<sup>2</sup> Gen 6:11-13 Now the earth had become corrupt in God's sight, and it was filled with violence. [12] God observed all this corruption in the world, and he saw violence and depravity everywhere. [13] So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Yes, I will wipe them all from the face of the earth!"<sup>NLT</sup>

<sup>3</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.82

<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.78

<sup>5</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2196

<sup>6</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur, Published in Nashville, Tennessee by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing. p.1869

2. That He is the Creator of Genesis 1, It was He who spoke all things into being, and that it He who now, ‘upholds all things by the Word of His Power’ (Heb. 1:3).
3. That He is the miracle-working God of the Old Testament, Who rolled back the Red Sea, brought down the walls of Jericho, and surrounded Elisha with an army of angels.
4. That He is the God who took on flesh (John 1:14), walked on water, healed the sick, cleansed the leper, raised the dead, defeated the devil, and ‘is alive for evermore!’ (Revelation 1:18).

F. F. Bruce writes: “The faith which our author has in mind embraces belief in the invisible spiritual order [which] ... involves, first and foremost, belief in Him who is King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God’ (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:17); and ‘belief in God’ carries with it necessarily belief in His Word. It is not belief in the existence of ‘a’ God that is meant, but belief in the existence of ‘the’ God who once declared His will to the fathers through the prophets and in these last days has spoken in His Son. Those who approach Him can do so in full confidence that He exists, that His Word is true, and that He will never put off or disappoint the person who sincerely seeks Him. For all that He has revealed of Himself, whether through the prophets or in His Son, assures us that He is altogether worthy of His people’s trust.”<sup>1</sup>

That’s the reason that the apostle Paul simply says in Romans 14:23...

**Rom 14:23b** ...whatever is not from faith is sin.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Leon Morris: “Faith is [not only] that by which one receives salvation, but it is also basic to the whole Christian way of life.”<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, Jesus said...

**Mark 9:23b** “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

So, ‘faith’ is required to please God and to do the impossible. The only limitations to this are the ones that you put on it.

In the Greek, the word for ‘believe’ (Gk. ‘*pisteuo*’) in Mark 9:23 is actually the verb form of the word ‘faith’ (Gk. ‘*pistis*’) in Hebrews 11:6, meaning that Jesus could have easily said: “If you have faith, all things are possible to him [or her] who has faith.”

‘Faith’ according to 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4 is also what is needed to conquer, defeat and overcome the world and all of its ungodly systems, temptations and persecutions.

**1 John 5:4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith.<sup>NKJV</sup>

In John’s Gospel and Epistles, the term ‘the world’ generally refers to “Satan’s worldwide system of deception and wickedness.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F.F. Bruce, “*The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews*” Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.286-287

<sup>2</sup> Leon Morris, ‘*The Epistle To The Romans*’, Copyright © 1988 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 p.492

<sup>3</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur, Published in Nashville, Tennessee by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing. p.1966

It is a hostile environment in which we live, but which we are ‘not of’ (John 17:16<sup>1</sup>).

And even though God loves the people in it (John 3:16), and Christ died for them (1<sup>st</sup> John 2:2<sup>2</sup>), there is an element in it, that the apostle John identifies as ‘false prophets’ (1<sup>st</sup> John 4:1<sup>3</sup>), ‘antichrists’ (1<sup>st</sup> John 2:18<sup>4</sup>), and ‘children of the devil’ (1<sup>st</sup> John 3:10<sup>5</sup>), that have both, rejected, and hated, the Lord Jesus Christ, and everyone who represents Him.

Jesus Himself said...

**John 15:18-19** “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. [19] “If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

That is why the apostle John says...

**1 John 2:15-17** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father but is of the world. [17] And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.<sup>NKJV</sup>

William MacDonald: “The world system is a monstrous scheme of temptation, always trying to drag us away from God and from what is eternal, and seeking to occupy us with what is temporary and sensual. People of the world are completely taken up with the things of time and sense. They have become the victims of passing things.”<sup>6</sup>

*The Spirit Filled Life Bible:* “Our faith brings victory over the world, providing a spiritual weapon by which we can combat both the temptations and the persecutions of a godless society.”<sup>7</sup>

John MacArthur: “The word for ‘overcomer’ results from a Greek word meaning ‘to conquer,’ or ‘to have victory,’ ‘to have superiority,’ or ‘conquering power.’ The word reflects a genuine superiority that leads to overwhelming success. The victory is demonstrable; it involves overthrowing an enemy so that the victory is seen by all.”<sup>8</sup>

That explains what that apostle John said in 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4.

<sup>1</sup> **John 17:16** “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>2</sup> **1 John 2:2** He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>3</sup> **1 John 4:1a,c** Beloved, do not believe every spirit...because many false prophets have gone out into the world.<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>4</sup> **1 John 2:18** Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>5</sup> **1 John 3:10a** In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest.<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>6</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2322

<sup>7</sup> *Spirit Filled Life Bible (NKJV)*. A Personal Study Bible Unveiling All God’s Fullness In All God’s Word. General Editor Jack W. Hayford, Litt.D. Copyright © 1991 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.1933

<sup>8</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur, Published in Nashville, Tennessee by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing. p.1966

John MacArthur: “The word ‘overcomes’, in the original language, conveys the idea that believers have continual victory over the world.”<sup>1</sup>

This is only possible while you determine to live ‘a life of faith’, and not just decide to use your faith only in times of trouble.

**Heb 10:38** Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back (...this is in unbelief), My soul has no pleasure in him."<sup>NKJV</sup> (...From: **Hab 2:4** "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith."<sup>NKJV</sup>)

R. Kent Hughes says that, “Faith is everything. ... Here in Hebrews the writer quotes Habakkuk 2:4 to stress that the whole Christian life is to be lived by faith. It is...both for salvation and Christian living.”<sup>2</sup>

That’s the reason that God is displeased and His soul has no pleasure in a person that shows a lack of faith.

Hendriksen and Kistemaker: “The righteous person who perseveres does not receive God's promise on the basis of keeping the law and (even) doing the will of God. He receives the promise by faith...”<sup>3</sup>

Faith is to be ‘a way of life’ to the believer. It is to guide our every thought and every action. and why the apostle Paul says again in **Romans 14:23**, “everything that does not come from faith is sin”.

The apostle Paul was well aware of the importance of living by faith.

**Rom 1:17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live (and literally, 'have their lives sustained') by faith.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

The ‘just’ that is spoken of are ‘the righteous’ and why the NIV says...

**Rom 1:17** For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”<sup>NIV</sup>

R. Kent Hughes: “God gives us His own righteousness to make man righteous through faith;”<sup>4</sup> [Therefore] “It is possible for men and women to stand sinless before God. It is possible to know that one has eternal life. It is possible to be free from the frustration of trying to earn righteousness and Heaven. The sole requirement is faith. Here is the greatest news ever proclaimed!”<sup>5</sup>

In Galatians 3:11, this time relating to the law, the apostle Paul repeats this command.

<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur, Published in Nashville, Tennessee by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing. p.1966

<sup>2</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.57

<sup>3</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, ‘*Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*’, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. **Hebrews**. p.303

<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Romans*, Copyright © 1991 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.28

<sup>5</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Romans*, Copyright © 1991 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.29

**Gal 3:11** But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."<sup>NKJV</sup>

The religious leaders of the time led people to believe that the only way they could be justified (or made right with God) was by keeping the law. The apostle Paul teaches that justification is by faith, and faith alone (Rom. 5:1<sup>1</sup>), thus saying "the just shall live by faith."

John MacArthur: "The ways of law and faith are mutually exclusive. To live by law is to live by self-effort and leads inevitably to failure, condemnation, and death. To live by faith is to respond to God's grace and leads to justification and eternal life."<sup>2</sup>

William Hendriksen writes: "The law has no power to subdue man's sinful tendencies. It cannot destroy the power of sin within man (Romans 8:3). How then can a sinner ever attain to the ultimate blessing of being righteous in the sight of God? ... [Paul says:] 'The righteous shall live by faith.' It is the man who has placed his entire confidence (or 'faith') in God, trusting (or 'believing in') him implicitly, and accepting with gladness of heart the gracious provision which that merciful Father has made for salvation, it is he, [and] he alone, who shall... enjoy the peace of God which passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7)... have fellowship with God "in Christ" (John 17:3)... rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:8)... be transformed into the image of the Lord from glory to glory (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 3:18)...and, strive to be a spiritual blessing to others to the glory of God (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3:8)."<sup>3</sup>

All of this is only possible 'through faith', and of course, received 'by faith', and why the apostle Paul says...

**2 Cor 5:7b** For we walk by faith, not by sight.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Simon J. Kistemaker writes: "Physical appearance stands in stark contrast to daily walking by faith and complete trust in Jesus Christ. In other words, the external image that we observe is passive and passing, while the internal quality of faith is active and abiding. We focus our attention not on visible things that are temporal (and that includes all our faults and past failures) but on those that are invisible and timeless (such as 'conforming to image of Jesus Christ')... We live by faith and not by sight."<sup>4</sup>

Doing this allows us to finally fulfil what Jesus said...

**John 14:12** "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."<sup>NKJV</sup>

That is the goal of faith, and why it is so important that we master it.

<sup>1</sup> **Rom 5:1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>KJV</sup>

<sup>2</sup> John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Galatians*, copyright © 1987 by John MacArthur, Moody Publishers, 820 N. LaSalle Boulevard, Chicago, IL 60610, p.77

<sup>3</sup> William Hendriksen, '*Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*', Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 49516. July 2002 **Galatians** p.127

<sup>4</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *2 Corinthians*, Baker Books, A Division of Baker Book House Co, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516, July 2002 p.178

## ¶ THE BLESSINGS OF GOD RECEIVED ‘BY FAITH’

Now, that we understand ‘the importance of faith’, what can we do by faith? What can we receive by faith?

The **First** thing we receive from God was His free gift of salvation; that was given ‘by grace’ and could only be received ‘through faith’.

**Eph 2:8-9** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it (that is, the ‘salvation’) is the gift of God, [9] not of works, lest anyone should boast.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

That’s why the apostle Paul goes on to say...

**Rom 3:28b** ... we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law.<sup>NLT</sup>

And as a result of this, the apostle Paul says...

**Rom 5:1-2** *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2] through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (...or as the New Living Translation puts it: “we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory”*<sup>NLT</sup>*). <sup>NKJV</sup>*

Romans 5:2 tells us that it is by faith alone that we now have access to God’s abundant grace, and can also, ‘by faith’, look forward to ‘sharing in God’s glory’ as well; And it is all because of what Christ has done for us. The apostle Paul says...

**Gal 2:20** *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live 'by faith' in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

The life we now live in this physical realm, still requires ‘faith’. And it is only ‘by faith’ that we can now live the life that God has for us (and not the one that sin and darkness dictates).

A **Second** blessing that is received ‘by faith’ is wisdom and guidance from God;

**James 1:5-8** *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. [6] But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. [7] For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; [8] he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

The apostle James reveals a very powerful principle that will work for every single need in your life: Being single minded, determined, and decisive (immovable), when it comes to your faith in God.

A **Third** blessing that is received ‘by faith’, is healing from God.

**James 5:14-15** *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. [15] And the prayer of*

faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

A **Fourth** blessing received 'by faith' is divine protection.

**1 Pet 1:5b** ...kept (shielded, preserved, and guarded”<sup>1</sup>) by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Simon J. Kistemaker: The Greek word for “kept” is a military term meaning ‘to protect someone from danger’<sup>2</sup>.

God will not permit satan to harm us, but will ‘shield and guard’ us by His power; But only if we put our faith and trust in Him. Faith is where the fight is.

**1 Tim 6:12** Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

**2 Cor 1:24b** ...it is ‘by faith’ you stand firm (or lit. ‘stand your ground’).

The Greek word for ‘stand’ (‘histemi’:G2476) here, literally means ‘to continue, endure, persist’ and ‘stand fast against an enemy (or) evils’<sup>3</sup>

Further to this, **Acts 26:18** says that we are “sanctified (that is, made holy, set apart for service to God) by faith” (...and if we ever slip up, there’s always 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9<sup>4</sup>); And in **Hebrew 6:12** that it is ‘through faith and patience’ that we ‘inherit the promises of God’, and of course in **Mark 11:23** that it is ‘faith’ that moves the mountains in our lives.

Everything in our Christian life revolves around ‘faith’. Whatever the situation, ‘faith demands’ that we never give up on God, or His promises. Even walking In love requires faith. Jesus says...

**Luke 17:3-5** "Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. [...that's walking in love...] <sup>[4]</sup> "And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." <sup>[5]</sup> And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

As much as **Galatians 5:6** says that ‘faith works through love’, here we find that it also takes faith to walk in God’s love (Gk. ‘agape-love’), which the apostle Paul says (in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:8), ‘Never fails’.

Faith is not something we ever ‘move on’ from. It is something we are to grow in, and develop, throughout our lives, if we are ever going to please God, walk in His blessings,

<sup>1</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary – James, Epistles Of John, Peter and Jude*, Baker Books, A Division of Baker Book House Co, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516, 1 Peter, p.44

<sup>2</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary – James, Epistles Of John, Peter and Jude*, Baker Books, A Division of Baker Book House Co, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516, 1 Peter, p.44

<sup>3</sup> (*The*) Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament, © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised edition, 1993, AMG Publishers, Chattanooga, TN 37422, Compiled and edited by Spiros Zodhiates, TH.D., p.786

<sup>4</sup> **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

live an overcoming life. It is necessary to be able to answer ‘Yes’ to the question Jesus asks in Luke 18:8...

**Luke 18:8b** “...when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”<sup>NKJV</sup>

## ♪ FAITH IS NOT A FEELING

Let’s look at ‘what faith is’. Hebrews 11:1 defines ‘faith’ saying...

**Heb 11:1** Now faith is the substance (and ‘confident assurance’,<sup>NLT</sup>) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Notice that ‘faith’ has nothing to do with feelings or the five physical senses. That’s why the apostle Paul says...

**2 Cor 5:7** For we walk by faith, not by sight.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Feelings are unreliable. They can often lie to you and even lead you astray.

People often go to God and ask Him for forgiveness. And because they don’t ‘feel’ any better, they walk away sad, depressed, and disheartened, wrongly assuming that God hadn’t forgiven them. But 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9 promises that...

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.<sup>NKJV</sup>

This same principle applies to everything else in God’s Kingdom as well (...such as wisdom (James 1:5-6), healing (James 5:15), and so on); That’s why the apostle Paul says again in Romans 14:23...

**Rom 14:23b** ...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.<sup>KJV</sup>

**Rom 14:23b** ...everything that does not come from faith is sin.<sup>NI V</sup>

It is important that we don’t allow our feelings to get in the way of our faith in God;

If you want to please God, always remember: Faith first; Feelings second.

## § FAITH (*OBJECTIVELY*) IS ‘SUBSTANCE’

Understanding ‘*faith is*’ not a feeling, let’s review Hebrews 11:1.

**Heb 11:1** Now *faith* is the substance (and ‘confident assurance’, <sup>NLT</sup>) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. <sup>NKJV</sup>

There are two main streams of thought in relation to this Scripture; First, ‘*faith*’ is an actual substance (in the spirit); Second, ‘*faith*’ is a ‘confident assurance’.

R. Kent Hughes: The Greek word (Gk. ‘*hypostasis*’) translated ‘substance and assurance’, “...literally means, ‘That which stands under’ or ‘a foundation’ and hence ‘substance’. This word has appeared twice earlier in Hebrews where it was translated objectively (as ‘being’ or ‘person’) in Hebrews 1:3, and subjectively (as ‘confidence’) in Hebrews 3:14.<sup>1</sup>

**Heb 1:3a** Who (talking about Christ) being the brightness of [God’s] glory, and the express image of His person (Gk. ‘hypostasis’) ... <sup>KJV</sup>

The ‘express image of God’ was found in the ‘person’ of Jesus Christ; That’s what **John 1:14** means when it says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

We also know from **John 10:30**<sup>2</sup> and **John 14:9**<sup>3</sup> that if you’ve seen Jesus, you’ve actually seen the Father (who is Spirit<sup>4</sup>, and invisible). Just as Jesus had ‘substance’ in the natural, Faith has ‘substance’ in the spirit.

Next, in Hebrews chapter 3, the word is used ‘subjectively’.

**Heb 3:14** We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence (Gk. ‘hypostasis’) we had at first. <sup>NIV</sup>

The Greek word translated ‘substance and assurance’ (Gk. ‘hypostasis’) is only used 5 times in the New Testament: Three times in Hebrews (Hebrews 1:3, 3:14 and 11:1), and twice in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians (in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 9:4 and 9:17).

Hendriksen and Kistemaker write: “If I am sure of something, I have certainty in my heart. This is a subjective knowledge because it is within me. Assurance, then, is a subjective quality. By contrast, the word ‘substance’ is objective because it refers to something that is not part of me. Rather, substance is something on which I can rely. As one translation has it, ‘Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for.’ That, in fact, is objective.<sup>5</sup>”

Both ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ qualities of faith are correct.

<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.61

<sup>2</sup> John 10:30 “I and My Father are one.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>3</sup> John 14:9b “He who has seen Me has seen the Father;” <sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>4</sup> John 4:24 “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>5</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, ‘*Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*’, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. Simon J. Kistemaker: *Hebrews*. p.310-311

First, let's look at faith as 'substance'.

**Heb 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.<sup>NKJV</sup>

'Faith' gives 'substance' to 'hope'; Hope is important. So, what is Biblical hope?

Hendriksen and Kistemaker say that, "Hope is not an inactive hidden quality. Hope is active and progressive. It relates to all the things God has promised believers: 'all things of present grace (...such as our salvation, 'For by grace are you saved through faith...' [Eph. 2:8<sup>1</sup>] and future glory' (...such as our glorified resurrection bodies [1 Cor. 15:43<sup>2</sup>])."<sup>3</sup>

That's why Hebrews 10:23 says...

**Heb 10:23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope (wrongly translated 'faith' in the King James) without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Notice once again that, 'biblical hope' is firmly based on the faithfulness of God, and His Word. Specifically what God says belongs to us through His Word [general guidance], or through His Spirit [specific guidance]. An excellent example of this is Romans 4:18, talking about Abraham...

**Rom 4:18** Who against (natural) hope believed in (supernatural) hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.<sup>KJVmod.</sup>

The Spirit Filled Life Bible: "The Greek word translated 'substance' literally means 'a standing under,' and was used in the technical sense of 'title deed.' (Something that proves that the property is yours.) Thus, faith is the title deed of things hoped for."<sup>4</sup>

Say for example, I was believing for a particular Study Bible that, for whatever reason, I couldn't have; I was praying to God about it, and was led by the Spirit to **Philippians 4:19**, that said: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus". God was letting me know that, if I prayed according to Mark 11:24, that it would be mine, no matter how impossible it seemed. (Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them ('right now'), and you shall have them.<sup>KJVmod.</sup>)

What should happen now is that, the moment I say 'Amen', that Bible should become 'real to me on the inside'. Faith now takes its place and becomes both 'the substance of what I am hoping for', and literal 'evidence in the Spirit' of what I can't see, until the actual Bible manifests in the natural. Therefore, if you were ask me when I received my Bible, I would say, the moment I said 'amen'.

<sup>1</sup> Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor 15:43a Our bodies now disappoint us, but when they are raised, they will be full of glory.<sup>NLT</sup>

<sup>3</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, 'Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews', Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. Simon J. Kistemaker: **Hebrews**. p.311

<sup>4</sup> Spirit Filled Life Bible (NKJV). A Personal Study Bible Unveiling All God's Fullness In All God's Word. General Editor Jack W. Hayford, Litt.D. Copyright © 1991 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.1884

As believers, we are not to let this ‘temporal seen realm’ influence us in any way when it comes to our walk of faith; And why the apostle Paul says in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:18...

**2 Cor 4:18** While we look not at the things which are seen (...or the lack thereof), but at the things which are not seen (...which faith's substance has taken the place of): for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen (...which God has promised, and you've received faith's substance for...) are eternal.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Faith’s ‘substance’ and ‘evidence’ in the spirit is far more real and powerful than anything in this physical realm. It will always overcome, change and reshape this realm to make it conform to the initial desire expressed as ‘hope.’ But this will only happen if we do as the apostle Paul says in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthian 5:7, and that is to make the decision, contrary to all physical evidence, to “walk by faith, not by sight”.

Only as we do this that we will truly ‘see’ all our prayers answered, before they ever manifest. In this way, we will never allow the devil to discourage us, nor allow ourselves to become impatient; Instead, we will always keep our confession and our conversation in line with God's promises, and as Jesus promised in **Mark 11:23**, ‘we shall have what ever we say’.

Hendriksen and Kistemaker: “The things we do not see are those that pertain to the future, that in time will become the present.”<sup>1</sup>

F. F. Bruce: “There is something to be said about the objective meaning represented by the King James Version [KJV] ('faith is the substance of things hoped for') and the New English Bible [NEB] ('faith gives substance to our hopes'). That is to say, things which in themselves have no existence as yet, become real and substantial by the exercise of faith.”<sup>2</sup>

We can now understand why, in terms of ‘faith being substance’, that Hebrews 11:1 concludes by saying that ‘faith is’, therefore...

**Heb 11:1b** ...the evidence of things not seen.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Ryrie Study Bible: “Faith gives reality and proof of things unseen, treating them as if they were already objects of sight rather than of hope.”<sup>3</sup>

R. Kent Hughes: “...the objective and subjective tenses of the word are not at odds because genuine faith does bring an assurance of what we hope for that is solid and substantive. The subjective certainty in our hearts has an objective solidity to it....”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, ‘*Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*’, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. Simon J. Kistemaker: **Hebrews**. p.311

<sup>2</sup> F.F. Bruce, “*The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews*” Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.277

<sup>3</sup> *The Ryrie Study Bible*, QuickVerse Electronic Version. Notes on *Hebrews 11:1*

<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.61

## ¶ FAITH (SUBJECTIVELY) IS ‘ASSURANCE’

Let's view Hebrews 11:1 from a ‘subjective’ standpoint.

**Heb 11:1** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>NASB</sup>

**Heb 11:1** Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. <sup>NIV</sup>

The *literal text* says: “Now faith brings our hopes into reality and becomes the foundation needed to acquire the things we long for. It [that is, faith,] is all the evidence required to prove what is still unseen.”<sup>1</sup>

R. Kent Hughes: “True faith is neither brainless nor a sentimental feeling. It is a solid conviction resting on God’s Word that makes the future present and the invisible seen. Faith has at its core a massive sense of certainty.”<sup>2</sup>

Romans chapter 4 brings this out, where the apostle Paul writes (...talking about God’s promise to Abraham about having a child in his old age)...

**Rom 4:20-21** He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; <sup>[21]</sup> And being fully persuaded (...here’s the massive sense of certainty...) that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Abraham’s faith, and ‘faith’ in general, is based on two things primarily: Fist, that God cannot lie:

**Num 23:19** God is not a man, that he should lie. He is not a human, that he should change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through? <sup>NLT</sup>

Second, that God watches over His Word to perform it:

**Jer 1:12** Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it." <sup>NASB</sup>

F.F. Bruce: “In Old Testament times, there were many men and women who had nothing but the promises of God to rest upon, without any visible evidence that these promises would ever be fulfilled; yet so much did these promises mean to them that they regulated the whole course of their lives in their light... In other words, they were men and women of faith. Their faith consisted simply in taking God at His word and directing their lives accordingly; ‘things’ yet future, as far as their experience went, were thus ‘present’ to faith, and things ‘outwardly’ unseen were ‘visible’ to the ‘inward eye.’”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> TPT

<sup>2</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews Volume Two – An Anchor for the Soul*, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.60

<sup>3</sup> F.F. Bruce, “*The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews*” Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.276

And it is because of their 'great faith' in God, that it goes on to say in Hebrews chapter 11, verses 33 and 34...

**Heb 11:33-34** By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, <sup>[34]</sup> quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. <sup>NLT</sup>

Hendriksen and Kistemaker: “The heroes of faith have one thing in common: they put their undivided confidence in God. In spite of all their trials and difficult circumstances, they triumphed because of their trust in God. For the author, faith is adhering to the promises of God, depending on the Word of God, and remaining faithful to the Son of God.”<sup>1</sup>

That's one of the things that Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1 and 2 bring out, when it says...

**Heb 12:1-2** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>[2]</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>NKJV</sup>

William MacDonald: “Faith is confidence in the trustworthiness of God. It is the conviction that what God says is true and that what He promises will come to pass. Faith must have some revelation from God, some promise of God as its foundation. It is not a leap in the dark. It demands, the surest evidence in the universe, and finds it in the Word of God. It is not limited to possibilities but invades the realm of the impossible. Someone once said, ‘Faith begins where possibilities end... [and] Difficulties are [simply] food for faith to feed on.’<sup>2</sup>

That's the revelation that the apostle John got, and why he said in 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4...

**1 John 5:4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith. <sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, ‘*Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*’, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. Simon J. Kistemaker: **Hebrews**. p.310

<sup>2</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2195

# CHAPTER 2



## *Where Faith Comes From*

### ¶ MARK 11:22 AS THE FAITH ‘OF’ GOD

Where does ‘faith’ come from? Why does it have the ability to ‘overcome the world’ (*according to 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4*<sup>1</sup>)?

In Genesis chapter 1, *it says over and over again*, “*Then God said...*” (vs. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26), followed by the words “*...and there was*” or “*...and it was so*” (vs. 3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 24).

In Psalms it is written...

**Psa 33:6** *By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.*<sup>NKJV</sup> (...verse 9...)

**Psa 33:9** *For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

This is also *confirmed* in the New Testament.

**Heb 11:3** *By faith we understand that the worlds were framed (and ‘formed’, <sup>NIV</sup>) by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

These verses tell us is that *God created everything ‘by faith’*; With *words of faith*; It also goes on to say that He is now...

**Heb 1:3b** ... *upholding all things by the word of His power...*<sup>NKJV</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> **1 John 5:4** *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Just as God used faith to believe and speak all things into existence, He, even now, continues to use His faith, to keep it all together (...and working the way it should).

**Col 1:17** *And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (or hold together*<sup>NIV</sup>*).* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Firstly, this tells us that God does have faith.

**Rom 3:3** *For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith* (Gk. ‘*pistis*’ [G4102]) of God without effect?<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

There are many who insist that this verse should be translated ‘the faithfulness of God’ (and most translations do); However, the Greek word used here (Gk. ‘*pistis*’ [G4102]), is actually the word ‘faith’, and why it is translated 238 times as ‘faith’ and only 3 times as ‘faithfulness’ (Romans 3:3 being one of them); And all the evidence points to the fact that they all should have been translated as ‘faith’. So God has faith!

Second, since He is a ‘faith God’, and therefore, all things were created with words of faith, then it must follow that, words of faith are what’s needed to change things as well.

Jesus revealed this (*following the incident with the fig tree*) when He said...

**Mark 11:22b-23** “Have faith in God” (or “Have the faith of God” or “Have the God kind of faith”).”<sup>[23]</sup> *For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe (the verb form of ‘faith’) that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he says.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

It is clear from the context that, in this instance, the latter two translations (“Have the faith of God” or “Have the God kind of faith”) are also correct.

Going back to Mark 11, verses 12 through 14, it becomes clear that it is the faith ‘of’ God (or ‘God’s faith’) that is being spoken of.

**Mark 11:12-14** *Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. [13] And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. [14] In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.” And His disciples heard it.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Jesus spoke directly to the fig tree. There was no prayer involved (...meaning that, He did not talk to God about it, nor did He do anything to indicate that He was believing God to do anything about it): It just said that He spoke to the fig tree, and went on His way.

**Mark 11:20-23** *And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.*<sup>[21]</sup> *And Peter calling to remembrance said to him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursed is withered away.*<sup>[22]</sup> *And Jesus answering said unto them, Have faith in God (...or Have the faith of God).*<sup>[23]</sup> *For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he says.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

The kind of faith that Jesus deals with first is ‘the God-kind of faith’. It is the same kind of faith that He exercised when He commanded the fig tree to die. The same thing is brought out in the parallel passage of Scripture found in Matthew 21:21.

**Mat 21:21** So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done." <sup>NKJV</sup>

It is obvious from both accounts that Jesus is talking about ‘the faith of God’, or ‘the God-kind of faith’, that believes and speaks, and expects things to happen. This same ‘God-kind of faith’ is taught again in Luke chapter 17, where Jesus says...

**Luke 17:6b** ... "If you have faith as a [grain of] mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree (...a tree whose roots were regarded as being particularly strong, making it virtually impossible to uproot<sup>1</sup> ...), 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." <sup>NKJV mod.</sup>

The ‘faith’ that is spoken of here is the type of ‘faith’ that speaks directly to things and expects them to ‘obey you’; This kind of faith doesn’t just work on mountains and trees, but on storms as well.

**Mark 4:35-41** On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." <sup>[36]</sup> Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. <sup>[37]</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. <sup>[38]</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" <sup>[39]</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. <sup>[40]</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" <sup>[41]</sup> And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" <sup>NKJV</sup>

Jesus demonstrates ‘the God-kind of faith’ by speaking to, the wind and the waves, and having them ‘obey Him’.

Therefore, in his commentary, A.T. Robertson says that the phrase ‘have the faith of God’ in Mark 11:22 is a viable translation, confirming the fact that God does have faith; And it is that ‘faith’ that Jesus tells us to ‘have’, when He says again in Mark 11:22...

**Mark 11:22b** "Have the faith of God" (...or "Have the God kind of faith"). <sup>NKJV</sup>

God has faith. And it was with this ‘faith’ that He created all things, and even now controls (and sustains) all things.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Ryrie Study Bible, QuickVerse Electronic Version. Notes on Luke 17:6

## § RECEIVING GOD'S FAITH

Now, with the knowledge that God is 'a God of faith', the next things we need to understand is that God is Spirit. Jesus says...

**John 4:24** "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." <sup>NKJV</sup>

There is *nothing 'natural'* about God. The way He *does things is often contrary to the 'natural order'* of things (and the way what we think they should be done).

Since 'God is Spirit', any attributes we receive from Him would be 'spiritual' in nature, and 'supernatural' (and even 'miraculous') in behaviour and operation. (*That includes both, 'supernatural faith in God', and 'the supernatural faith of God'*).

And as to how we receive this extraordinary, God-kind of faith; Jesus reveals this in His conversation with (...who was 'a ruler of the Jews'), when He explains about the Kingdom of God, and how to gain entrance into that Kingdom and says...

**John 3:6** "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." <sup>NKJV</sup>

A spiritual birth is required to gain entrance into God's spiritual Kingdom. The simplest way to do this is brought out in Romans 10:9, where the apostle Paul says...

**Rom 10:9** That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>NIV</sup>

Once we do this, we are then 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:6), and as a result of this 'spiritual birth', we receive God's own faith. The apostle Paul goes on to say...

**Rom 12:3** For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one [the] measure of faith. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Again, God has faith. Therefore, the faith that we receive from Him must be His faith. This is why the apostle John says...

**1 John 5:4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith. <sup>NKJV</sup>

This victory (or 'triumph') is only for those who are 'born of God' and are now 'in Christ'.

William MacDonald: "...the one who really overcomes the world is not the great scientist or philosopher or psychologist, but the simple believer who realises that the things which are seen are temporary and that the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Cor. 4:18)".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **2 Cor 4:18** While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. <sup>KJV</sup>

## ¶ MARK 11:22 AS FAITH ‘IN’ GOD

Knowing that Mark 11:22 can be viable translated as ‘*Have the faith of God*’; We will see that it can, and must, also be translated as ‘*Have faith IN God*’. To understand why, remember that Jesus went on to say in Mark 11:24...

**Mark 11:24** “*Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask (or ‘desire’, KJV) when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.*”<sup>NKJV</sup>

Since prayer is always directed toward God, then ‘whenever we pray’, it must mean that we ‘Have faith in God’.

For the most part, Christians are a lot more comfortable praying to God ‘about’ things (rather than having to speak ‘to’ them), and why, I believe that so many prefer this translation over the other.

Even so, there’s no question that ‘faith in God’ is extremely powerful. It is what David used to defeat Goliath. It is what Abraham used to have a child at a hundred years old. It is what Joseph used to go from the dungeon to being the second in command in all the land. It is what Hebrews 11 is all about.

Therefore, we will be looking at both ‘faith in God’, and ‘the faith of God’. We will see how they differ, and also how to apply each in our lives.

## ¶ DIFFERENT KINDS & LEVELS OF FAITH

The Bible talks about different ‘*kinds*’ of faith and different ‘*levels*’ of faith.

First, the different **Kinds Of Faith**.

The apostle James uses the term ‘*rich in faith*’, where he writes ...

**James 2:5** Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith (that is, to have ‘the necessary abundance of faith to believe’) and [to be] heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?<sup>NKJV</sup>

That is, ‘the poor of this world’, because of their love for God, have a Heavenly inheritance that they can look forward to, and that is the Kingdom of God!

The apostle Paul talks about those who have ‘*shipwrecked their faith*’.

---

<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2322-3

**1 Tim 1:19** Cling tightly to your faith in Christ, and always keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.<sup>NLT</sup>

In context, this seems to be talking about believers who have rejected their moral compass and have stopped believing in Christ. Even though this quality of faith doesn't *really* fit into this sub-topic, it still needed to be acknowledged for the sake of our study.

Following this, there's '**genuine faith**'. The apostle Paul writes...

**2 Tim 1:5** when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.<sup>NKJV</sup>

A more accurate translation of this is '**sincere faith**', as brought out in the *New American Standard Bible* which says...

**2 Tim 1:5** For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.<sup>NASB</sup>

There is a kind of 'faith in Christ' that can be described as 'genuine' and 'sincere', that will never waver and never falter; It is a 'faith' that is totally committed to the Lord, and faithful to the very end.

Now we come to the different **Levels Of Faith** that the Bible talks about.

The least of these is called '**no faith**'. This is seen in the incident recorded in Mark.

**Mark 4:35-41** On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "**Let us cross over to the other side.**"<sup>[36]</sup> Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.<sup>[37]</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.<sup>[38]</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"<sup>[39]</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "**Peace, be still!**" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.<sup>[40]</sup> But He said to them, "**Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?**"<sup>[41]</sup> And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"<sup>NKJV</sup>

Where there is fear, there's usually 'no faith'; they cannot co-exist together. (*More on this when we look at the Enemies of Faith.*)

A step up from this is '**little faith**'. This is brought out in several Scriptures, including the famous 'Sermon On The Mount.'

**Mat 6:28-30** "**So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;**"<sup>[29]</sup> "**and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**"<sup>[30]</sup> "**Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?**"<sup>NKJV</sup>

Jesus considers people who can't believe that God will look after their basic needs, as having 'little faith'.

Other examples of 'little faith' can be found in **Matthew 8:26** (when Jesus calmed the storm) and said to His disciples: "*Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?*"; And of course, in **Matthew 14:31**, when Jesus says to Peter (...who takes his eyes off Jesus while walking on water, becomes afraid, and cries out for help): "*O you of little faith, why did you doubt?*"

The major causes of 'little faith' are generally, 'worry' (*Mat. 6:28*), 'fear' (*Mat. 8:26*), and 'doubt' (*Mat. 14:31*).

In contrast is 'great faith'. *Great faith* was demonstrated by a Canaanite woman in Matthew chapter 15, who refused to give up on her daughter being healed by Jesus.

**Mat 15:28b** "*O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.*" And her daughter was healed from that very hour."<sup>NKJV</sup>

The Roman Centurion, in Matthew chapter 8, also had 'great faith'.

**Mat 8:5-13** Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, <sup>[6]</sup> saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralysed, dreadfully tormented." <sup>[7]</sup> And Jesus said to him, "*I will come and heal him.*" <sup>[8]</sup> The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed." <sup>[9]</sup> "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." <sup>[10]</sup> When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "*Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!* (...verse 13 goes on to say...) <sup>[13]</sup> Then Jesus said to the centurion, "*Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.*" And his servant was healed that same hour.<sup>NKJV</sup>

In the Book of Acts, we see Stephen described as a man 'full of faith'.

**Acts 6:8** And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.<sup>NKJV</sup>

While 'great faith' can believe for the impossible, those who are 'full of faith' are usually 'full of power as well' and therefore, can 'do the impossible'.

## WE CAN INCREASE IN FAITH

Faith does not remain the same for very long. It goes through changes, depending on what you do with it. Let's see what the Scriptures have to say about growing our faith, and how exactly we can do that.

It is a fact that 'we can increase our faith'. The apostle Paul, talking about Abraham, says...

**Rom 4:20** *He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God*<sup>NKJV</sup>

**Rom 4:20** *Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.*<sup>NLT</sup>

Your faith has the potential to grow stronger with use; It can also grow weak from lack of use.

The apostle Paul (*writing to the Thessalonians*) also says...

**2 Th 1:3** *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly (lit. 'has increased beyond measure' or 'has grown beyond what could be expected'<sup>1</sup>), and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Both of these Scriptures clearly tell us that we can increase our faith. This is further confirmed in what the apostle Paul says in Romans 10:17.

**Rom 10:17** *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

To put this verse into context, remember that the apostle Paul already said...

**Rom 10:13-14** *For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."<sup>[14]</sup> How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*<sup>NKJV</sup>

And it is in light of this, that he goes on to say in **verse 17**, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God".

An example of this is in Acts chapter 14.

**Acts 14:7-10** *And there [in Lystra and Derbe] they [that is, Paul and Barnabas] preached the gospel.<sup>[8]</sup> And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:<sup>[9]</sup> The same heard Paul speak: who (that is, Paul...) steadfastly beholding him (the cripple), and perceiving that he (the cripple) had faith to be healed,<sup>[10]</sup> Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on your feet. And he leaped and walked.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From: John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1&2 Thessalonians*, copyright © 2002 by John MacArthur, Moody Publishers, 820 N. LaSalle Boulevard, Chicago, IL 60610, p.225

It is only after the apostle Paul preached the Gospel, that the cripple received faith for healing, and at which point, it says that Paul, 'perceiving that he had faith to be healed', said with a loud voice, 'Stand up on your feet'; Of course, he was marvellously healed, with it going on to say that: 'he leaped and walked'! This again goes back to what Romans 10:17 says. The reason for this is found here...

**Heb 4:12** *For the word of God is living and ('active'<sup>NASV</sup> and) powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Faith comes as a result of hearing, because the Word is 'living, active, and powerful'.

Notice also that this 'Word' works in the realm of the soul and spirit. That means that it is spiritual and supernatural in nature. This means that we need to look briefly at 'The Triune Nature Of Man'.

## ¶ THE TRIUNE NATURE OF MAN (SPIRIT, SOUL & BODY)

Man is a three-part being consisting of spirit, soul, and body. There are several Scriptures that support this. The apostle Paul writes in 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:23 ...

**1 Th 5:23** *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

We have an 'outward man' (which is our natural body), and we have an 'inward man' that is our spirit. This explains the apostle Paul saying...

**2 Cor 4:16** *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

The 'inward, spirit man is renewed day by day' by feeding it spiritual food, that comes from God's Word. Jesus said...

**John 6:63** *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Just as eating natural food gives natural strength to our 'outward man', when we 'feast' on God's Word (through reading, listening, or meditating on it), we receive spiritual strength for our 'inward man' called 'faith' (Romans 10:17).

This assumes that you are receiving 'the rightly divided Word of Truth' <sup>1</sup>, and not some wrongly divided, watered-down, powerless, religious rhetoric that does nothing for you.

---

<sup>1</sup> **2 Tim 2:15** *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

That's the reason the apostle Paul says to Timothy...

**2 Tim 2:15** *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

The 'rightly divided word of truth' is essential to our spiritual growth, and our ability to 'live by faith'. Since faith is always built upon information of some kind, then it's never going to be better than the information it was originally built on. If the information is wrong, then faith will fail; And if the information is right, then faith will have no limitations to it (Mark 9:23<sup>1</sup>).

It is this 'rightly divided Word' that Hebrews 4:12 says is 'living, and active, and powerful', and which allows us to grow and increase in our 'faith in God', and 'the faith of God.'

## ⌚ HOW WE INCREASE OUR FAITH

It is God's Word that increases and strengthens our faith. Let's learn how we can do this best; And in the most efficient way possible.

The key is in Romans 10:17, where the apostle Paul says again...

**Rom 10:17** *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

The phrase 'hearing and hearing' implies several things:

1. You are to give your attention to God's Word by taking the time to receive it.
2. Your are to do it on a continual basis (...it is to be a continuous action).
3. That it becomes a part of your daily routine.

Proverbs chapter 4 tells us this.

**Prov 4:20-22** *My son, attend to my words (or lit. 'give attention to my words'); Incline your ear to my sayings.<sup>[21]</sup> Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart;<sup>[22]</sup> For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh.* <sup>NKJV mod.</sup>

Taking time out to 'attend to God's Word', which is also referred to as 'meditating God's Word', will not only grow your faith at an accelerated rate, but according to Psalm 1, has an attached 'blessing'.

**Psa 1:1-3** *Blessed is the man [or woman] Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; <sup>[2]</sup> But his [or her] delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. <sup>[3]</sup> He [or she]*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mark 9:23* Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." <sup>NKJV</sup>

*shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he [or she] does shall prosper.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Putting God and His Word *first*, will cause you to ‘prosper’ in all that you do.

Giving your attention to, and *meditating on*, God’s Word, also *makes you successful in everything you do*. Joshua was facing impossible odds, when God spoke the following to him...

***Josh 1:8*** “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night (...this is another way of saying ‘give attention to it day and night’), that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.<sup>NKJV</sup>

A *further reason* for prosperity and success is brought out in what the apostle Paul says ...

***Rom 12:2*** *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

The more you attend to, and meditate on, God’s Word, the more you become ‘transformed in your thinking and way of life’. You will walk more and more in God’s perfect will for your life.

And as you do, you allow God to bless you more and more, while growing stronger and stronger in faith. This results in you not only live a supremely blessed life, but also an incredibly powerful one. You too can then say...

***Rom 8:37*** *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

# CHAPTER 3



## *How Faith Works (Corresponding Action)*

### § THE BASIS FOR FAITH

Faith is based on the following two things: First, the fact that God cannot lie; Second, that He watches over His Word to perform it.

The fact that God cannot lie is found in Numbers chapter 23:19.

**Num 23:19** God is not a man, that he should lie. He is not a human, that he should change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?<sup>NLT</sup>

This is one of those extremely powerful, foundational statement. It reveals the nature of God Himself, and lets us know that God is steadfast, unchanging, and absolutely faithful.

*The Believers Study Bible:* “These words [in Numbers 23:19 were] to emphasise and reiterate God’s immutability (defined as, ‘the quality that renders change or alteration impossible’<sup>1</sup>), impressing upon Balak (the king of the Moabites who tried to get Balaam to curse the Israelites, who were encamped near the confines of his territory) that God could not, and would not, change His mind about Israel (...regardless of their behaviour at the time<sup>2</sup>).”<sup>3</sup>

This truth about God is so foundational, that it is repeated several times in the Scriptures, in a variety of ways.

**Mal 3:6a** “For I am the LORD, I do not change;<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Webster’s Dictionary 1828

<sup>2</sup> See Numbers 24 & 25

<sup>3</sup> Believers Study Bible (BSB), QuickVerse Electronic Version. Notes on Numbers 23:19

**Psa 89:35** I have sworn an oath to David, and in my holiness I cannot lie:<sup>NLT</sup>

**James 1:17** Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above, who created all heaven's lights. Unlike them (that is 'unlike heaven's lights'), he never changes or casts shifting shadows.<sup>NLT</sup>

An especially good reference is Hebrews 6:18, which confirms all these truths. It shows us where our faith comes from, and why we can have faith in God and His Word.

**Heb 6:18** So God has given both His promise and His oath (...which is 'a solemn affirmation or declaration'). These two things (...that is, His promise and His oath...) are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to Him for refuge can take new courage, for we can hold on to His promise with confidence.<sup>NLT/NKJV</sup>

R. Kent Hughes: "...the 'two unchangeable things in which it was impossible for God to lie' are his 'word of promise' and his 'oath'. His 'promise' to Abraham, and to us<sup>1</sup>, can do nothing other than come true because God's 'word is truth' (John 17:17) and because God 'does not lie' (Titus 1:2). He is the author of truth, the essence of truth. His oath, though unnecessary, is the double assurance that he cannot lie. Truth has sworn by itself that its truth shall truly be fulfilled. There is no more possibility of God's promises failing us than of God falling out of Heaven! His Word is eternally sealed with the double surety of 'promise and oath'."<sup>2</sup>

And that's the basis for our faith.

The Full Life Study Bible: "...because Scripture is the inspired Word of God, it is completely true and trustworthy. The truth of God's Word is inherent in the very words and sentences of Scripture. Its authors were guided by the Holy Spirit to write the original manuscripts in such a way that the transmission of God's message to mankind was communicated without error."<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, since we know that God does not lie, and that the Word of God is completely reliable, then our 'faith' built on the most solid of foundations. There is nothing to stop us from doing everything it says we can, and fulfilling our divine destiny.

The Second thing our faith (in God) is based on is the fact that, God is continually watching over His Word to perform it.

**Jer 1:12** Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it."<sup>NASB</sup>

The Spirit Filled Bible: We are to: "Rest in the confidence [that's faith] that God is always working to fulfil His Word".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gal 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (The New Living Translation says: "And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and now all the promises God gave to him belong to you." )

<sup>2</sup> R. Kent Hughes, Hebrews Volume One – An Anchor for the Soul, Copyright © 1993 by R. Kent Hughes, Published by Crossways Books, A division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois. 60187. p.177

<sup>3</sup> The Full Life Study Bible – King James Version. Copyright © 1992 by Life Publishers International. Published by Zondervan Publishing House. Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530, U.S.A. p.1949

<sup>4</sup> Spirit Filled Life Bible (NKJV). A Personal Study Bible Unveiling All God's Fullness In All God's Word. General Editor Jack W. Hayford, Litt.D. Copyright © 1991 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.1139

When ever we decide to meditate on, and stand upon, the promises of God, Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest is making sure that whatever we say (*that is in line with His will and His Word*) comes to pass. This is reflected in Hebrews 4:14.

**Heb 4:14** *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

## ¶ THE VOICE OF FAITH

The first thing that faith requires in order to work, is some form of 'action'. This 'action' cannot be forced. It must come from your heart. It will usually manifest itself in either, what you say, or what you do, or both.

Let's look first at the way 'faith' manifests itself in what you 'say'. Jesus says...

**Luke 6:45b** "For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."<sup>NKJV</sup>

The confessions or declarations that come out of our mouth cannot be just 'religious rhetoric' or 'vain repetitions'. They must be actual 'words of faith that come from a heart that is fully persuaded'.

Jesus identifies what 'religious rhetoric' is (*speaking to the religious leaders*)...

**Mat 15:7-8** "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:"<sup>[8]</sup> "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honour Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me."<sup>NKJV</sup>

The *Message Translation* puts it so well when it says: "These people make a big show of saying the right thing, but their heart isn't in it."

Even though these people sound godly, and seem like they are 'saying' all the 'right things', their heart isn't in it. Everything they are saying is more for the benefit of those around them (*in an effort to impress them*), than an expression of their actual faith in God.

Next, Jesus also identifies what 'vain repetitions' are.

**Mat 6:7** But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

In other words, Jesus says here that, if you are not in faith, then no matter how many times you pray or confess the Word, it will all just be empty, meaningless and vain repetitions. They will do nothing to move God, or change the situation you're in.

## § HOW ‘*FAITH IN GOD*’ WORKS

The right way to make declarations of faith.

In Romans 10:10, the apostle Paul (*while dealing with the requirements for salvation*), says...

**Rom 10:10** *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

There are two things of great importance brought out here: First, it is with the heart that you are to believe; And Second, it is with the mouth that what you believe is released.

Now we can better understand what Jesus meant when He said (*following the fig-tree incident*)...

**Mark 11:22b-24** *"Have faith in God" (or "Have the faith of God" or "Have the God kind of faith").*<sup>[23]</sup> *For verily (or 'surely') I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he says.*<sup>[24]</sup> *Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

This the perfect example of how we are to activate, and apply our faith, by what we ‘say’, for both ‘*faith in God*’, and ‘*the faith of God*’.

First, let’s look at *Faith in God*.

One of the finest examples of the way that this ‘faith in God’ speaks and acts is found in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel chapter 17 (*when David is facing Goliath*).

**1 Sam 17:45-46** *Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.*<sup>[46]</sup> *"This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

David has so much faith and trust in God that he declares the outcome before the battle even begins. He makes it clear to Goliath that he isn’t defying Israel, but ‘*the God of the armies of Israel*’; And why he says to Goliath, “*This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.*”

That’s how ‘*faith in God*’ speaks; It is *bold*; It is *courageous*; And it is ‘*fully persuaded that what God has promised, He will do*’.

And, as to how Faith in God acts; That’s brought out in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17:48 (*just two verses down*), where it says...

**1 Sam 17:48** *So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hastened and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Not only did David declare his ‘faith in God,’ but he acted on it. He ran towards the problem. David killed Goliath with a single sling-shot to the head.

**1 Sam 17:51b** And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.<sup>NKJV</sup>

That’s how ‘faith in God’ speaks and acts; It trusts God completely; And expects to win, every single time.

There is no doubt that David had ‘faith in God’. He (*according to the Septuagint*) writes...

**Psa 91:2** I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.<sup>NKJV</sup>

But not only does this work in the field of battle, but in the home as well; As was the case with the Shunammite woman in 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings chapter 4. This woman, out of pure kindness, decides to build a room in her house for ‘the man of God’, so that, whenever he was in town, he would have a place to stay (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 4:9-11); For her kindness, Elisha asks her what she would like, and she replies that she would like a son; And it says...

**2 Ki 4:16a** Then he said, “About this time next year you shall embrace a son.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

And, sure enough, she had a son. One day a situation arises, where sadly, he dies in her arms. Like David, this woman had ‘faith in God’. It was so great, that she takes the body of her dead son, places it on Elisha’s bed (*in the room they built for him*), and asks her husband for the means to get to Elisha; And it says...

**2 Ki 4:23** So he said, “Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath.” And she said, “It is well.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

This is her ‘declaration of faith’ in the midst of battle. She was so determined to get her son back, that she wouldn’t let anything get in the way of her ‘faith in God’. Even when Elisha asks after her child, she doesn’t waver from her confession (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 4:26). She is insistent that he comes to her house (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 4:30). When Elisha finds the boy lying dead on his bed, he prays to God, lays himself on the boy, as God instructs, and the boy comes back to life (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 35). And so it says...

**2 Ki 4:36** And he called Gehazi [his servant] and said, “Call this Shunammite woman.” So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, “Pick up your son.”

**2 Ki 4:37** So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Again: Hendriksen and Kistemaker: “The heroes of faith...put their undivided confidence in God. In spite of all their trials and difficult circumstances, they triumphed because of their trust in God.”<sup>1</sup>

‘Faith in God’ is not limited to the Old Testament. Let’s look at Mark chapter 5.

**Mark 5:25-34** Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, <sup>[26]</sup> and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no

<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, ‘*Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*’, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49516. Second Printing, July 2002. Simon J. Kistemaker: **Hebrews**. p.310

better, but rather grew worse.<sup>[27]</sup> When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.<sup>[28]</sup> For she said (...this is her 'voice of faith', and more specifically, her 'faith in God' speaking, and she says...), "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."<sup>[29]</sup> Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.<sup>[30]</sup> And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?"<sup>[31]</sup> But His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"<sup>[32]</sup> And He looked around to see her who had done this thing.<sup>[33]</sup> But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.<sup>[34]</sup> And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."<sup>NKJV</sup>

Just like David and the Shunammite woman, this woman with the issue of blood refused to give up on God. She believed God (or had 'faith in God'), and declared the outcome in the midst of adversity: "...For she said, 'If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well' (Mark 5:28)."

Everything we've seen is best explained in Romans chapter 4. the apostle Paul (talking about Abraham's extraordinary 'faith in God,') says...

**Rom 4:17** (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him (or 'in the presence of God') whom he (that is, Abraham) believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.<sup>NKJV</sup>

This is faith's battle cry; It refuses to accept anything contrary to the will of God; It expects the impossible all the time; It lives in the realm of the supernatural, and expects God to come through every single time; That's why it goes on to say...

**Rom 4:18-21** Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.<sup>[19]</sup> And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead (...knowing fully well that it would take a miracle to have a child), when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb (...which never had children in the past, and was all the more impossible now):<sup>[20]</sup> He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;<sup>[21]</sup> And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.<sup>NKJV</sup>

'Faith in God' is fully persuaded that God will not only keep His promise, but that He has the power to do it as well; And as a result, it refuses to allow anything in the natural to get in the way of the supernatural. That's why it 'calls those things that be not as though they were'.

This is a governing principle in the Kingdom of God. Everything in the Kingdom works this way. That's why God says to His people, in Joel 3:10...

**Joel 3:10b** Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'<sup>"NKJV</sup> (The New American Standard Bible says:)

**Joel 3:10b** Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man (or 'a mighty warrior'<sup>1</sup>)."<sup>NASB</sup>

What we say does matter.

**Prov 18:21** Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.<sup>NKJV</sup>

In the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews encourages us to stay strong, and not to deviate from our confession of 'faith in God'.

**Heb 4:14** Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.<sup>NKJV</sup>

The Amplified Bible puts it so well when it says: "Let us hold fast our confession of faith, and cling tenaciously to our absolute trust in Him [as Saviour]".

This is how 'faith in God' works; It speaks and acts according to what God has promised in His Word and confirmed by His Spirit. It is not quiet about it.

**Psa 5:11-12** But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.<sup>[12]</sup> For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; With favour You will surround him (or her) as with a shield.<sup>NKJV</sup>

**Psa 35:27** Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favour my righteous cause; And let them say continually, "Let the LORD be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."<sup>NKJV</sup>

So, this is how 'Faith in God' works; It 'calls things that be not as though they were'; It 'believes in the impossible'; It 'knows that whatever God has promised in His Word, He will do'; and it 'rejoices in God, and giving Him all the glory.'

## ♪ THE 'LOGOS' & 'RHEMA' OF GOD

There are two Greek words that are both translated 'God's Word': They are 'Logos' and 'Rhema'.

'Logos' makes reference to the Word of God in its entirety, or 'the Scriptures as a whole'.

One of the best examples of this is found in Mark chapter 7.

**Mark 7:9b** "You reject God's laws in order to hold on to your own traditions."<sup>NLT</sup>  
(...and then in verse 13...)

---

<sup>1</sup> From The Lexham English Bible

**Mark 7:13a** "making the word (or Gk. 'Logos') of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down." <sup>NKJV</sup>

It is also found in John chapter 1, in a most profound way.

**John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word (or lit. 'the Logos'), and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. (...Continuing in verse 14...)

**John 1:14** And the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>KJV</sup>

The word 'Logos' is used here to show that Jesus is the embodiment of all of God's Word, and why He said in the 'Sermon On The Mount', in Matthew 5:17...

**Mat 5:17** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil." <sup>NKJV</sup>

One more exceptional use of the word 'Logos' is found in Hebrews.

**Heb 4:12** For the word (or 'Logos') of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>NKJV</sup>

That's the 'Logos' of God refers to Christ Himself, and also to 'the Holy Word of Scripture'.

Next is 'Rhema'. It refers to 'very specific parts of Scripture' (not the whole).

It is the word that is used (regarding how 'the faith of God' works), particularly relating to the specific situations and problems we face.

Some have defined 'Rhema' to mean 'the Spoken Word of God' because that's how it is generally used. That is not entirely correct though, because the 'Logos' can also be spoken as well.

The following are examples of how the 'Rhema' is used in Scripture.

**John 6:63** "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words (or 'the Rhema') that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." <sup>NKJV</sup>

**Heb 11:3** Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed (or 'formed' <sup>NIV</sup>) by the word (or Gk. 'Rhema') of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

This Scripture tells us that, since 'Rhema' (or 'Spoken Word') of God created all things, then that's what's needed to change all things, and what Jesus was trying to tell us in Mark 11:23, when He said...

**Mark 11:23** For verily (or 'assuredly') I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his (or her) heart, but shall believe (in his or her heart) that those things which he says shall come to pass; he (or she) shall have whatsoever he says. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

A further example of how 'Rhema' is used in Scripture is when the apostle Paul says...

**Eph 6:17** And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word (or Gk. 'the Rhema') of God:<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

And we know this to be true, because that's exactly what Jesus did when the devil tried to tempt Him.

**Mat 4:4b** "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word' (or 'every Rhema') that proceeds from the mouth of God."<sup>NKJV</sup>

The 'Rhema' of God gives us life (John 6:63). It moves mountains (Mark 11:23). It is an effective weapon against the devil (Eph. 6:17, Mat. 4:4). And it is also where faith comes from.

**Rom 10:17** So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word ('Rhema') of God.<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Note here that, as much as reading your whole Bible is wonderful, 'faith can only come when you hear and meditate on the Scriptures 'one verse at a time.''

A wonderful example of this in Acts 10. It shows us how this works, and also how 'Rhema' and 'Logos' are related to each other.

**Acts 10:44** While Peter was still speaking these words (or Rhema), the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word (or Logos).<sup>NKJV</sup>

It is the 'Rhema' of God, based on the 'Logos' (or 'Holy Word of Scriptures') that is described as 'the Word of Power'. It is this 'Word of Power' that 'the faith of God' requires, in order to bring the miraculous, supernatural, and impossible into your life.

## § HOW 'THE FAITH OF GOD' WORKS

Let's see how this 'Rhema' or 'Word of Power' actually works on everything that God made and created. Referring back to Mark 11 as an example.

**Mark 11:12-14** Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. <sup>[13]</sup> And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves (...and therefore, promising fruit), He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. <sup>[14]</sup> In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Jesus spoke directly to the fig tree. He did it in a manner that suggested it would actually understand what He said. He did not pray to God about the fig tree. Nor did He do anything to indicate that He was believing God to do something about it. He spoke to the fig tree, and went on His way.

**Mark 11:20-21** And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. <sup>[21]</sup> And Peter calling to remembrance said to him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursed is withered away. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Faith ‘in’ God and the Faith ‘of’ God always attacks the ‘root’ of the problem. Just like the fig tree, only by killing the ‘root’ of the problem, will its existence permanently end.

Roots are hidden. That is why we must ‘walk by faith and not by sight’. Faith attacks the root. People who walk by sight (struggling to believe God), often get depressed and discouraged. They complain that ‘nothing has changed’. In doing this, they negate all their prayers, and never receive anything they are believing for. James illustrates this.

**James 1:6-8** But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. <sup>[7]</sup> For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. <sup>[8]</sup> A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Those who have decided to “walk by faith and not by sight” (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:7), find their prayers go unhindered, and ‘by the morning’ they find that the problem has ‘dried up from the roots’, and will soon begin to ‘wither away’, never to return.

And it is at this point, that it goes on to say in (*Mark 11 and*) verse 22...

**Mark 11:22** And Jesus answering said unto them, Have faith in God (...and also, ‘Have the faith of God’). <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

We established that both these statements are true. You will never operate in the faith ‘of’ God if you don’t first have absolute faith ‘in’ God. You will never get to the place where you begin to do as the Word says, and ‘*talk to things*’ (*instead of talk about them*). You will never get to the place where you believe with all your heart, that the things to which you speak, will obey you, and do as you say.

That’s how ‘faith in God’ and ‘the faith of God’ works.

With this in mind, let’s look in detail, how ‘the faith of God’ actually works, with Jesus Himself saying in Mark 1:23...

**Mark 11:23** For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he says. <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

So, while people with faith ‘in’ God trust God Himself to look after them, help them overcome insurmountable odds, and assist them in winning every battle; Those with the faith ‘of’ God, trust God’s Word, and expect that what they say in faith, will come to pass.

Larry W. Hurtado: “*Here Mark presents Jesus as an example of faith, and his readers are not only to admire Jesus’ faith but also to imitate it.*”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark*, New International Biblical Commentary. © 1983, 1989 by Larry W. Hurtado, Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. P.O. Box 3473, Peabody, Massachusetts, 01961-3473, p.185

In the parallel account in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is recorded as saying the same thing. There was no mistake in what He said.

**Mat 21:21** So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done." <sup>NKJV</sup>

On a totally separate occasion, Luke records Jesus saying...

**Luke 17:6b** ... "If you have faith as a [grain of] mustard seed, you can say to this ('sycamine', <sup>KJV</sup> or) mulberry tree (...a tree whose roots were regarded as being particularly strong, making it virtually impossible to uproot<sup>1</sup> ...), 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and (Jesus says:) it would obey you." <sup>NKJV mod.</sup>

The King James Version says: "It should obey you".

That is how, 'the faith of God' works. It comes from the heart, not the head.

Jesus used this same principle to still the storm.

**Mark 4:35-41** On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." <sup>[36]</sup> Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. <sup>[37]</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. <sup>[38]</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" <sup>[39]</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. <sup>[40]</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" <sup>[41]</sup> And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" <sup>NKJV</sup>

Again, Jesus spoke directly to the wind and the sea, and 'it', 'obeyed Him'.

Why does the faith 'of' God work this way?

Remember God created everything with words of faith, and He is now...

**Heb 1:3b** ... upholding all things by the word (or 'Rhema') of His power... <sup>NKJV</sup>

This is the phrase ("the Word of Power") that most scholars use to describe the method by which God created all things. Therefore, that is what is now required to influence, control and even change all things.

The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Vol. 1, p.600) says that: "The picture of faith moving mountains (in Mark 11:23) and uprooting the mulberry tree (in Luke 17:6) [...and, of course, calming the storm...] confirm that 'the Word of power' is able to transform the created order."

<sup>1</sup> The Ryrie Study Bible, QuickVerse Electronic Version. Notes on Luke 17:6

## § WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

Jesus made it possible for the faith ‘*of*’ God to work for us.

Firstly, Christ died for our sins and redeemed us back to God.

**Col 1:13-14** Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: [14] In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: <sup>KJVmod.</sup>

When we were translated into God’s Kingdom, God also...

**Eph 2:6** ...raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (...Who, according to **Hebrews 8:1**, is said to be ‘seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens...’), <sup>NKJV</sup>

It is from this position of power and authority that Jesus expects us to do as He says ‘move mountains’, speak to objects, and have ‘signs’ follow us.

**Mark 16:17-18** “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; [18] “they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

This is what He meant when He said...

**John 14:12** “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

He also said in Luke 24:49...

**Luke 24:49** “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

He repeats this almost word-for-word in Acts, saying...

**Acts 1:8** “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

Regardless of whether you are struggling with faith ‘in’ God or the faith ‘of’ God, the Holy Spirit in you, empowers you to do mighty works; This all so that mankind could take their rightful place as God intended from the beginning.

**Gen 1:26a,c** Then God said...let them have dominion (meaning that, after creation, God handed dominion of the planet over to us, and said again: “Let them have dominion...”) over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

That was always God’s plan for mankind: And why it says in Psalm 8:6...

**Psa 8:6** You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; <sup>NKJV</sup>

The New Living Translation puts it so well when it says...

**Psa 8:6** You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things--<sup>NLT</sup>

Everything Jesus taught and did (*motivated by love*); was so that man could regain dominion and authority over everything. He wanted the planet to be returned to its correct state of ‘Paradise’.

## ♪ FIRST STEPS...

Knowing all this. *where do we start?*

The answer is found in James chapter 1.

**James 1:22-25** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.  
[<sup>23</sup>] For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; [<sup>24</sup>] for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. [<sup>25</sup>] But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. <sup>NKJV</sup>

So, the first thing we need to do is ‘hear’ the Word (and meditate on it).

Second, as we receive *revelation, inspiration, and power* from the ‘living Word’ (Hebrew 4:12), to ‘do’ what it says (*as led by the Spirit*).

The apostle James received this revelation from his elder-Brother Jesus, specifically, when Jesus said...

**Mat 7:24-27** "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: [<sup>25</sup>] "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. [<sup>26</sup>] "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: [<sup>27</sup>] "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." <sup>NKJV</sup>

So, again, we must ‘do’ or ‘practice’ what we’ve learned. Over time, as we become more proficient at it, we are to help others with it (not just ourselves). The apostle James says:

**James 2:14-26** What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? [<sup>15</sup>] If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily

food, <sup>[16]</sup>and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? <sup>[17]</sup> Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead ('and useless', <sup>NLT</sup>). <sup>[18]</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>[19]</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble! <sup>[20]</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? <sup>[21]</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>[22]</sup> Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? <sup>[23]</sup> And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. <sup>[24]</sup> You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. <sup>[25]</sup> Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? <sup>[26]</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Once we become proficient in faith, we are to ‘*walk in Love*’ as well, and share God’s love and blessings with everyone around us. The apostle Paul warns us about not walking in love.

**1 Cor 13:2** *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing (...and may I add, ‘to God’).* <sup>NKJV</sup>

In God’s eyes, faith-filled people mean absolutely nothing to Him, unless their faith is motivated by love, and they are visibly loving to those around them.

It is equally important for us to grow in both faith and love. Doing so means that means that we will become the people that God needs us to be. When this happens, it will lead to His perfect will being done in this earth (and for everyone on it).

# CHAPTER 4



## *Enemies Of Faith* *(Where The Fight Is)*

### ¶ THE FIGHT OF FAITH

There are things that get in the way of our faith.

We know this because the apostle Paul says...

**1 Tim 6:12a** Fight the good fight of faith (...this is the same Greek word used in **Hebrew 11:1**, which said: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.")... NKJV

And since there is a 'fight of faith', then there must be 'enemies to faith'.

These 'enemies' come in various forms: There is 'the enemy of unforgiveness', 'the enemy of unbelief', 'the enemy of doubt', and worst of all, 'the enemy of fear'.

Theses are not to be mistaken for 'hindrances' of faith – such as 'failure to understand righteousness', or 'failure to understand 'in Him' realities', or 'failure to understand the new creation' and so on.

### ¶ THE ENEMY OF UNFORGIVENESS

Looking first at the enemy of unforgiveness. Jesus Himself warns us in Mark chapter 11...

**Mark 11:23-26** *For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he says.* <sup>[24]</sup> *Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.* <sup>[25]</sup> *And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.* <sup>[26]</sup> *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.* <sub>KJVmod.</sub>

It has been argued that verse 26 doesn't exist in many of the older manuscripts, however in Matthew 6:15, we find the identical verse, and which exists in all the manuscripts, where Jesus says...

**Mat 6:15** *"But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* <sub>NKJV</sub>

Therefore, we will deal with the passage in Mark 11 as is.

According to Jesus, unforgiveness will literally put you off-side with God, and severely compromise your faith.

William MacDonald: "An unforgiving spirit in a believer breaks fellowship with the Father in Heaven and hinders the flow of blessing."<sup>1</sup>

The reason for this is brought out in 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:16, where the apostle John tells us that...

**1 John 4:16b** *God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.* <sub>NKJV</sub>

The Full Life Study Bible says: "Let no Christian delude himself that he has faith sufficient for answered prayer if he is secretly holding animosity or bitterness in his heart against anyone."<sup>2</sup>

That's why the Bible is full of Scriptures that encourage us to live 'a life of forgiveness,' not just forgive people from time to time.

**Col 3:12-15** *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;* <sup>[13]</sup> *bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.* <sup>[14]</sup> *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.* <sup>[15]</sup> *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.* <sub>NKJV</sub>

**Eph 4:26-27** *"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,* <sup>[27]</sup> *nor give place to the devil.* <sub>NKJV</sub>

He then goes on to say in verses 31 and 32...

<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.1351

<sup>2</sup> *The Full Life Study Bible – King James Version*. Copyright © 1992 by Life Publishers International. Published by Zondervan Publishing House. Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530, U.S.A. p.1503

**Eph 4:31-32** Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>[32]</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Believers have an ongoing duty to forgive, with William Hendriksen saying therefore, that:  
“...effective prayer presupposes a loving heart.”<sup>1</sup>

It is up to us to make sure that we don't allow ourselves (or even excuse ourselves), for being 'unforgiving'. We will ultimately suffer and loose out on the blessings of God.

If you are aware of any unforgiveness in your heart, it is essential that you acknowledge it.

**1 John 1:9** If we confess [or lit. ‘acknowledge’] our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>NKJV</sup>

The phrase ‘cleansed us from all unrighteousness’ means that, not only are you forgiven, but you are restored back to a place of ‘perfect righteousness’, to where nothing can get in the way of your ‘faith’.

Forgiveness must become a way of life. It must be a part of your ‘walk of faith.’

**Gal 5:6b** What is important is faith expressing itself in love. <sup>NLT</sup>

Faith and love were designed to work together. It was ‘Love’ who gave us His faith. He expects us to use it to look after ourselves, and bless others.

We must recognise unforgiveness for the ‘enemy’ that it is to us, and absolutely ‘refuse’ to give it any place in our life.

## § THE ENEMY OF UNBELIEF

Continuing on, the next ‘enemy of faith’ we will look at is ‘unbelief’ which not only stops your faith operating, but also stops you receiving from God.

**Mark 6:2-6** And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! (...Had this been all they said, it would have opened the door for God to do mighty works here too! But unbelief decides to speak, and ruins everything; With these same people now going on to say in verse 3...) <sup>[3]</sup> “Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” And they were offended at Him. <sup>[4]</sup> But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” <sup>[5]</sup> Now He

<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark*, © Copyright 1975 by William Hendriksen, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 49516. p.462

could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.<sup>[6]</sup> And He marvelled because of their unbelief (Gk. 'apistia' [G570]).<sup>NKJV</sup>

In the parallel version in Matthew 13:58, the same Greek word is used there when it says...

**Mat 13:58** Now He did not do many mighty works (meaning that He did do some 'mighty works') there because of their unbelief (Gk. 'apistia' [G570]).<sup>NKJV</sup>

In the Greek the word 'unbelief' (Gk. 'apistia' [G570]) means 'faithlessness, disbelief, unfaithfulness, and unbelief'.<sup>1</sup>

It is also the same Greek word used in Romans 4:20 to explain why Abraham did succeed.

**Rom 4:20** He [that is, Abraham] did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief (Gk. 'apistia' [G570]), but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,<sup>NKJV</sup>

Rejecting 'unbelief' (and not wavering), is the pathway to strengthening our faith. We must consciously do this all the time.

Unbelief is a choice. We choose to either believe, or not. That was the case in Mark 16:14.

**Mark 16:14** Later He [Jesus] appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief (Gk. 'apistia' [G570]) and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Notice two key things here:

First, these people has a choice to believe those who had brought them the wonderful news. They decided not to believe it.

Second, Jesus was very unhappy with them, and 'rebuked their unbelief'.

Thomas also did this.

**John 20:24-29** Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.<sup>[25]</sup> The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."<sup>[26]</sup> And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"<sup>[27]</sup> Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving (Gk. 'apostos' [G571] – meaning 'disbelieving' and 'faithless',<sup>2</sup>), but believing."<sup>[28]</sup> And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"<sup>[29]</sup> Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>1</sup> QuickVerse – Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible: © copyrighted 1980, 1986 and assigned to World Bible Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved (Software Version)

<sup>2</sup> QuickVerse – Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible: © copyrighted 1980, 1986 and assigned to World Bible Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved (Software Version)

Insisting on ‘seeing’ before ‘believing’ is choosing not to believe. This defeats the whole point of believing; You only need to believe while you can’t see.

If left unchecked, unbelief can lead you down a destructive path. The apostle Paul says...

**Rom 11:20a** Well said. Because of unbelief (Gk. ‘*apistia*’ [G570]) they [the Jews] were broken off, and you stand by faith.

The New Living Translation makes it a lot clearer when it says there...

**Rom 11:20a** Yes, but remember--those branches, the Jews, were broken off because they didn't believe God, and you are there because you do believe.

Paul is referencing what Jesus said, and that is...

**Luke 13:28** “There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you [Jews] see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.”<sup>NKJV</sup>

Ultimately, ‘unbelief’ comes from an evil heart, because it generally ‘chooses’ not to believe. That’s why Hebrews 3:12 says...

**Heb 3:12** Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief (Gk. ‘*apistia*’ [G570]) in departing from the living God.

And as a result of this, it goes on to say in Hebrews 3:19...

**Heb 3:19** So we see that they could not enter in (...to God's rest and God's promises...) because of unbelief (Gk. ‘*apistia*’ [G570]).

If we don’t deal with unbelief as the enemy of our faith, we may end up like the father in Mark 9 who cried out...

**Mark 9:24b** “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief! (Gk. ‘*apistia*’ [G570])”<sup>NKJV</sup>

## § THE ENEMY OF DOUBT

Next, let’s go and look at a related enemy of faith, and that is, the enemy of doubt.

There are two key Greek words that are translate as ‘doubt’.

The first Greek word (Gk. ‘*distazo*’ [G1365]) means ‘to duplicate, to waver (in opinion), to doubt’<sup>1</sup>. This word only has two references; Matthew 28:17 and Matthew 14:31.

---

<sup>1</sup> QuickVerse – Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible: © copyrighted 1980, 1986 and assigned to World Bible Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved (Software Version)

**Mat 28:17** When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted (*distazo:G1365*).<sup>NKJV</sup>

**Mat 14:31** And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt (*distazo:G1365*)?"<sup>NKJV</sup>

This kind of 'doubt' is not devoid of 'faith'; It just compromises it, and gets in the way of it.

The second Greek word (Gk. 'diakrino' [G1252]), is so much worse than the first. It means 'to withdraw from, oppose, hesitate, [and] stagger.' It is the main word for 'doubt' (found in 22 Scriptures). It is also the word that is used in Mark 11:23, and the parallel verse in Matthew 21:21, where Jesus says...

**Mark 11:23** For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt (*diakrino:G1252*) in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

**Mat 21:21** So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt (*diakrino:G1252*), you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done."<sup>NKJV</sup>

This type of 'doubt' actually stops your faith from working. That's why the apostle Paul says...

**Rom 14:23** But he who doubts (*diakrino:G1252*) is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.<sup>NKJV</sup>

It is also, this same word that the apostle James used in James chapter 1, verses 6 through 8, detailing the consequences of this kind of doubt, when he says...

**James 1:6-8** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting (*diakrino:G1252*), for he who doubts (*diakrino:G1252*) is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.<sup>[7]</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;<sup>[8]</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.<sup>NKJV</sup>

The person who 'doubts' in this way receives nothing from God. That's why this kind of 'doubt' is classified as a true 'enemy' of faith.

Resisting this kind of 'doubt' has tremendous benefits. The apostle Paul says...

**Rom 4:20** He (*Abraham*) staggered (...the same Greek word for 'doubt' [*diakrino:G1252*]) not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;<sup>NKJV</sup>

The Spirit Filled Life Bible says that: "Believing can take opposite forms. It can be faith or it can be doubt. When you believe that God exists and that He loves you and wants to meet your needs, then your believing creates faith in your heart. On the other hand, doubt is just as real. The reverse of faith, doubt tells you that God does not exist or that He is un-loving and un-caring about your needs. Doubt gives rise to fear, which brings torment, not peace. Fear actually keeps you from receiving the good things God desires to send your way. Capture this truth: Doubt, and do without; with faith believe, and receive.... Expect a miracle!"<sup>(pg.1493)</sup>

## § THE ENEMY OF FEAR

Now, when we talk about 'fear' in relation to 'faith', we are not talking about fear phobias<sup>1</sup>, or the fear that keeps us from doing foolish things<sup>2</sup>, nor even 'the fear of the Lord'<sup>3</sup>, but the kind of fear that directly effects our ability to believe God and receive anything from Him.

The first of these is: ***The Fear That Results From Disobeying God.***

This can be traced all the way back to the Garden of Eden, where this kind of 'fear' (*and, in fact, 'fear' in general*), was first experienced; When Adam knowingly sinned<sup>4</sup>, and it says...

***Gen 3:9-10 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" [10] So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."***<sup>NKJV</sup>

First of all, it is important to note that man was created with God's own glory as clothing. That's brought out in Psalm 8:5, which correctly states...

***Psa 8:5 For you made us only a little lower than God, and you crowned us with glory and honour.***<sup>NLT</sup>

This 'glory' is said to be the same covering (as described in Ezekiel 1:27<sup>5</sup>) that God has; And because we were made in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26), we too had it.

When Adam and Eve sinned, the first thing that they lost was this protective covering; which is why they were naked, exposed and defenceless, and why Adam said, "I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:10). 'Fear' drove Adam away from God and His presence, resulting in Adam loosing all his 'faith in God'.

It usually begins with 'the tempter' pushing you to do the wrong thing (...often assuring you that no body will find out); Once you yield, he then turns around and becomes 'the accuser' who viciously condemns you for your actions. He makes you feel so bad that you actually become terrified of even approaching God about the problem, fearing what He might do to you.

This portrayal of God is largely due to ministers in the past who have described God as a mad, vengeful, hard-hearted Being, that's always in a bad mood, and always looking to judge you for any wrong you've done; The Body of Christ has become reluctant and afraid to approach God, opting instead, to stay away from Him. In doing so, they have

<sup>1</sup> Fear of darkness (achiophobia), fear of heights (acrophobia), fear of flying (aerophobia), etc.

<sup>2</sup> Walking into traffic, playing with explosives, and so on.

<sup>3</sup> ***Prov 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:***<sup>KJV</sup>

<sup>4</sup> ***1 Tim 2:14 And Adam was not deceived... ; Rom 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)***<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ***Ezek 1:27 Also from the appearance of His [God's] waist and upward I saw, as it were, the colour of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.***<sup>NKJV</sup>

no faith in Him to do anything good for them, or that He can forgive them, and help them overcome their struggles.

The truth, however, is that, no matter how badly, and how many times, we've sinned and wronged God, the Cross of Christ was more than enough, and all we have to do is what 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9 tells us.

**1 John 1:9** If we (notice that the apostle John includes himself in this, and says again, if 'we' ...) confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.<sup>NKJV</sup>

The next time you do anything wrong, do not be driven away from God by fear and guilt (like Adam and Eve). Decide, instead, to trust God's love for you (John 3:16); Confess your sin (1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9); And get back into fellowship with Him as soon as possible. Do not allow the devil to ever get any kind of foothold in your life.<sup>1</sup>

Next, let's look at: ***The Fear That Arises From Negative Faith.***

This is the kind of 'fear' that believes for the worst possible outcome for any given situation. People suffering from this kind of fear may have a 'form of godliness' to them (...saying that they believe in God), when in reality, they are in constant fear. Their actions constantly show that they have absolutely no faith in God.

We see an excellent example of this in Job 1:5.

**Job 1:5** And it was so, when the days of their feasting [that is, his sons feasting...] were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Job was not only 'believing' the worst about his children, but he was continually verbalising it as well ('...for Job said...Thus did Job continually'); According to Jesus, in **Mark 11:23**, if you truly believe and speak, you will definitely have what you say.

Proverbs 18:21 also warns us that...

**Prov 18:21** Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.<sup>KJV</sup>

With all this in mind, it is not surprising that Job goes on to say...

**Job 3:25** For the thing which I 'greatly feared' is come upon me, and that which I was 'afraid of' is come unto me.<sup>KJV</sup>

Job's fear is the same fear that is behind most of our problems today. That's why Jesus said...

**Luke 12:29-32** "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind."<sup>{30}</sup> "For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things."<sup>{31}</sup> "But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you."<sup>{32}</sup> "Do not fear (Gk. 'phobeo' [G5399]; lit. 'Do no

<sup>1</sup> **Eph 4:27** Neither give place to the devil.<sup>NKJV</sup>

be frightened'), little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."<sup>NKJV</sup>

There was a yast difference in the situation between Job and what Jesus talks about in Luke; But in both cases, 'fear' is at the centre of it all. This kind of fear is *very dangerous*. It manifests itself in different ways, making it difficult to both identify and detect.

This is the same 'fear' that is found in Matthew, where Peter asks to walk on water.

**Mat 14:30** But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid (Gk. 'phobeo' [G5399]); and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"<sup>NKJV</sup>

In every example we've looked at, as diverse as they are, we find that this kind of 'fear' is always the result of overestimating the circumstances (...and the devil's part in it), and underestimating God (...and His ability, and willingness, to take care of it all).

Finally, there is: ***The Fear That Is Described As 'Faithless and Fearful'***.

It is what's brought out in Mark chapter 4 where it says...

**Mark 4:35-41** On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."<sup>[36]</sup> Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.<sup>[37]</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.<sup>[38]</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"<sup>[39]</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind (...the word 'rebuked' is the same word used to describe casting out unclean spirits in Mark 1:25 and 3:12, suggesting that demonic powers caused the storm...), and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.<sup>[40]</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful (Gk. 'deilos' [G1169] – 'faithless and fearful')? How is it that you have no faith?"<sup>[41]</sup> And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"<sup>NKJV</sup>

Jesus Himself equates this kind of 'fear' with having 'no faith'; And why Jesus says to them 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?' This is the same kind of fear that is found in Revelation 21:8.

**Rev 21:8** But the fearful (Gk. 'deilos' [G1169]), and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.<sup>NKJV</sup>

If left to run its course, this kind of 'faithless-fear' is extremely destructive.

And example of this is found in the incident recorded in Numbers chapter 13, where Moses sends out twelve spies (which **Numbers 13:3** says were "all tribal leaders of Israel") to spy out the land. After forty days, ten of the twelve come back with an 'evil report'. This report filled the hearts of the people with fear, which prompted other two spies, named Joshua and Caleb, to immediately stand up, and say...

**Num 14:9** Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!"<sup>NLT</sup>

Joshua and Caleb had absolute 'faith in God'. They wanted to go and posses the land immediately (*Numbers 13:30*<sup>1</sup>). The rest of the people, because of their 'faithless-fear', refused to do so, and turned against them; And so it goes on to say in verse 10...

**Num 14:10** But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb.<sup>NLT</sup>

This resulted in all of them (except for Joshua and Caleb), dying in the wilderness, and never getting to enjoy their promised land. Even worse is that while *they* were afraid of the giants, we find out later that *the giants were afraid of them*. One of the inhabitants of the land, by the name of Rahab, says...

**Josh 2:9b-11** ... "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you."<sup>[10]</sup> "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed."<sup>[11]</sup> "And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath."<sup>NKJV</sup>

Fear blinds you to the truth. And if you let it, it will keep you from your promised land. That's why the Bible is full of Scriptures that tell us not to fear.

**Isa 35:4** Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you.<sup>NKJV</sup>

**2 Ki 6:16b-17** Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.<sup>[17]</sup> And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.<sup>NKJV</sup>

If they were there for Elisha, they will surely be there for us as the children of God (*Hebrew 13:2*<sup>2</sup>), and why the apostle John exclaims...

**1 John 3:1** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!<sup>NKJV</sup>

Today, if you are 'born again from above', and are a part of God's Family, then know that you have the power and the potential to be fearless; With the apostle Paul saying in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:7 ...

<sup>1</sup> **Num 13:30** Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>2</sup> **Heb 13:2** Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!<sup>NLT</sup>

**2 Tim 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but [a spirit] of power and [a spirit] of love and [a spirit] of a sound mind.<sup>NKJV</sup>

It is up to us to trust God, and not let fear get the better of us. That's why the Psalmist says...

**Psa 56:3** Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You.<sup>NKJV</sup>

James goes a step further and says...

**James 4:7** Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.<sup>NKJV</sup>

We are to 'trust God' (Psalm 56:3), and 'submit' to Him. We must also actively 'resist the devil' and expect that he will 'flee from us' (...not the other way around).

Hebrews chapter 13 says...

**Heb 13:5b-6a** For He [that is, God] Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."<sup>[6a]</sup> So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear".<sup>NKJV</sup>

The one thing that the devil has no defense against is the fact that God loves you! That's why the apostle John says...

**1 John 4:18a** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear...<sup>NKJV</sup>

Just as 'fear' is faith's greatest enemy, 'love' is fear's greatest enemy! That's why 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:8 says...

**1 Cor 13:8a** Love never fails.<sup>NKJV</sup>

# CHAPTER 5



## *The Life Of Faith* (*The Life The Pleases God*)

### ¶ LIVING BY FAITH

‘*The Life Of Faith*’ is all about a life that *pleases God*. We see it *best* brought out in Hebrews chapter 11, where it says...

**Heb 11:5-6** *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* <sup>[6]</sup> *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

Not only did Enoch *walk by faith*, but in order for him to have ‘*pleased God*’ he must have *diligently sought after Him*. When his time came, he never experienced death. He simply went home with God. That was one of his ‘*rewards*’ for all his efforts.

In the same way, when we *decide* to live a life of ‘*faith*’ that ‘*pleases God*’, we open the door for *all of God’s blessings* to come into our life. The apostle John says...

**1 John 3:22** *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Receiving whatever we ask of God’ lacking absolutely nothing simply because *we listen to Him*, and *do the things that are pleasing in His sight* is the definition of a ‘*blessed life*’.

And if we *do* make any mistakes, there’s always 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9 that promises...

**1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Doing that puts us back in fellowship with Him; Back on track with His plan, His purpose, and His destiny for our lives; It's as simple as that.

As we look at certain people in the Bible (*that purposed in their heart to 'live by faith'*), it is important to remember what Acts 10:4 said.

**Acts 10:34** *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:*<sup>KJV</sup>

In other words, if we choose to follow their example (*doing as they did as led by the Spirit, of course*), then God will do for us what He did for them. We too can enjoy the same blessings and benefits that they did.

## ¶ THE FAITH OF DAVID (*A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART*)

Our first example is David. His faith in God led him from a life as a shepherd, to that of a king. He was born in Bethlehem (...which would later be known as 'the city of David', where Jesus, the Messiah, would also be born). He was the youngest of Jesse's seven sons, and it was his job to tended the sheep.

David did his best to care of the sheep; Even risking his life for them.

**1 Sam 17:34-36** *But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock,<sup>[35]</sup> I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it.<sup>[36]</sup> "Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God."*<sup>NKJV</sup>

This is where David 'proved' himself; And where God trained him up as the next king of Israel. There were no certificates or degrees; No one was watching. It was all done *in secret*. When the time was right, God publicly 'recognised' him, and 'promoted' him.

**1 Sam 16:1-13a** *Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons."<sup>[2]</sup> And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'<sup>[3]</sup> "Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."<sup>[4]</sup> So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"<sup>[5]</sup> And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.<sup>[6]</sup> So it was, when they came, that he looked*

at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him." [7] But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." [8] So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." [9] Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." [10] Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." [11] And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." [12] So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" [13a] Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward." <sup>NKJV</sup>

Soon after this David's '*faith in God*' comes shining through as he battles Goliath.

Goliath (*the Philistines champion*), would come out each morning and issue a challenge to anyone in the Israelite army to fight him. Whoever wins the fight, wins the war. No one had the courage to accept the challenge, until David heard what was going on...

**1 Sam 17:32-33** Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." [33] And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." <sup>NKJV</sup>

David answers Saul's concerns...

**1 Sam 17:34-37** But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, [35] I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. [36] Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." [37] Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!" <sup>NKJV</sup>

There is so much in these verses with regard to '*faith in God*', and also, '*the life, or lifestyle, of faith*'.

David and Goliath were both trained for battle since they were boys. David however was taught by God Himself; While Goliath battled men; David battled lions and bears!

Notice also that David's boast is not in his skill, but in his '*faith in God*.' He says that, just the way that '*the LORD*' delivered him from '*the paw*' of the lion and bear, He *will deliver him* from '*the hand*' of the Philistine. David's '*faith in God*' is so great, that Saul actually entrusts the entire fate of Israel into his hands, and says...

**1 Sam 17:37b** "Go, and the LORD be with you!" <sup>NKJV</sup>

Notice that David has got Saul trusting God as well. True ‘*faith in God*’ encourages others to believe God the way you believe God.

Following Saul’s unsuccessful effort to outfit David with his armour, it goes on to say...

**1 Sam 17:40-42** Then he [David] took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook [Goliath had four brothers], and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. <sup>[41]</sup> So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. <sup>[42]</sup> And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained [or ‘despised’] him<sup>1</sup>; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking (...and the furthest thing from a battle-scared warrior). <sup>NKJV</sup>

To Goliath, the Israelites had sent some ‘pretty little boy’ to answer his challenge; And that made him really mad; And so, it goes on to say...

**1 Sam 17:43-45** So the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. (Notice that none of the enemies ‘curses’ can affect you, if you don’t let it.) <sup>[44]</sup> And the Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!” <sup>[45]</sup> Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>NKJV</sup>

This is David’s *absolute ‘faith in God’*. He doesn’t waver, or hesitate. He just declares the end result (*because that’s what faith does*)...

**1 Sam 17:46-47** "This day<sup>2</sup> the LORD will deliver you into my hand (notice, once again, that David’s faith is not in himself, but in ‘the LORD’; And it is from this place of faith that he says...), and I will strike you and take your head from you (...notice here that ‘faith in God’ also requires ‘action’ on your part). And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>[47]</sup> “Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.” <sup>NKJV</sup>

After this *declaration of ‘faith in God’*, comes the ‘*corresponding action*’.

**1 Sam 17:48-51** So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hastened and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. (Notice that David is running towards the entire Philistine army, not just Goliath!) <sup>[49]</sup> Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. <sup>[50]</sup> So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. <sup>[51]</sup> Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and

<sup>1</sup> “You’ve got to be kidding me! ...What the hell is this?”

<sup>2</sup> Faith is always ‘now’; ‘this day’...

killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Following this, after David is made king, he again does something extraordinary. He brings back the ark of the Covenant, and unashamedly dances before the Lord; It says in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel chapter 6, verses 14 and 15...

**2 Sam 6:14-19** *And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a priestly tunic.* <sup>[15]</sup> *So David and all Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with much shouting and blowing of trumpets.* (*Continuing on to verses 18 and 19, it says...)* <sup>[18]</sup> *When he had finished, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty.* <sup>[19]</sup> *Then he gave a gift of food to every man and woman in Israel: a loaf of bread, a cake of dates, and a cake of raisins. Then everyone went home.*<sup>NLT</sup>

It is little wonder that he was called ‘a man after God’s own heart’.<sup>1</sup>

**Acts 13:21-22** “*And afterward they [the Israelites] asked for a king (...meaning that this was never God’s will...); so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.* <sup>[22]</sup> *“And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.’*<sup>NKJV</sup>

God is looking a man or a woman ‘after His own heart’, who has ‘fearless-faith’; who will fight all the giants in the land; who will worship God with all their might; And most of all, who is willing to do ‘all God’s will’.

That is an example of ‘the life of faith’, and the kind of confidence and boldness (*in both word and deed*), that must accompany it.

## ♪ THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM (*THE FATHER OF FAITH*)

Another example of what ‘the life of faith’ looks like, can be seen in the life of Abraham. It was his ‘faith in God’ that opened the door to salvation and redemption, for all mankind.

As one commentator put it: “*The call of Abram is the beginning of God’s answer to the evil of human hearts, the strife of nations, and the groaning brokenness of His whole creation. It is the beginning of the mission of God and the mission of God’s people.*”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> **1 Sam 13:14** *But now thy [that is, Saul’s] kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People: A Biblical Theology of the Church’s Mission*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 66

Prior to Abraham, God had permitted the nations to have their own governments. That's until the *incident at Babel* (*when man rebelled against God*) which resulted in them *unknowingly*, opening the door for the devil. Through them, the devil was able to take control of the whole earth (*yet another example of the devil's subtlety and deception*).

To stop the devil taking over the planet and wiping out all of mankind, God, in His mercy, re-established His presence in the earth through an old childless couple from Babel itself.

The plan was to *create* from Abraham and Sarah, *a nation* that would bring in *Kingdom love, Kingdom health, Kingdom prosperity, Kingdom wisdom, Kingdom values, and of course, Kingdom power*. In this way, other nations could see what they were missing out on and get a glimpse of what *God's original plan for man was*.

To do this, God required a man and a woman who would *unquestioningly leave all that they knew behind*, and 'by faith' do what was asked of them.

**Heb 11:8-10** *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.* <sup>[9]</sup> *By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;* <sup>[10]</sup> *for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Allen Browne: "There was *no hope for humanity there*: as subsequent generations showed; *Imperial powers like Assyria and Babylon showed no respect for God's kingdom* as they *perpetrated the power-crazed attitudes of Nimrod*<sup>1</sup> [*'the Hunter'*] (Genesis 10)."<sup>2</sup>

Here we see that the life of faith isn't only about '*courage in battle*' and '*declaring the outcome*' but also about '*trust and obedience*' when you don't really know what's actually going on.

But this wasn't Abraham's only act of faith. In Genesis chapter 22, Abraham's '*faith in God*' is *absolute*. When God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, he is willing to do so *without question*.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry writes: "Nimrod was a great man in his day; he began to be mighty in the earth, Those before him were content to be upon the same level with their neighbours, and though every man bare rule in his own house, yet no man pretended any further. Nimrod was resolved to lord it over his neighbours. The spirit of the giants before the flood, who became mighty men, and men of renown, Genesis 6:4, revived in him. Nimrod was a great hunter. Hunting then was the method of preventing the hurtful increase of wild beasts. This required great courage and address, and thus gave an opportunity for Nimrod to command others, and gradually attached a number of men to one leader. From such a beginning, it is likely, that Nimrod began to rule, and to force others to submit. He invaded his neighbours' rights and properties, and persecuted innocent men; endeavouring to make all his own by force and violence. He carried on his oppressions and violence in defiance of God himself. Nimrod was a great ruler. Some way or other, by arts or arms, he got into power, and so founded a monarchy, which was the terror of the mighty, and bid fair to rule all the world. Nimrod was a great builder. Observe in Nimrod the nature of ambition. It is boundless; much would have more, and still cries, Give, give. It is restless; Nimrod, when he had four cities under his command, could not be content till he had four more. It is expensive; Nimrod will rather be at the charge of rearing cities, than not have the honour of ruling them. It is daring, and will stick at nothing. Nimrod's name signifies rebellion; tyrants to men are rebels to God. The days are coming, when conquerors will no longer be spoken of with praise, as in man's partial histories, but be branded with infamy, as in the impartial records of the Bible."

<sup>2</sup> Allen Browne, Abraham's life: a summary (Genesis 12-25), Seeking the kingdom; <https://allenbrowne.blog/2016/09/26/abrahams-life-a-summary/>

**Gen 22:2-18** Then He [God] said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." <sup>[3]</sup> So (...without question or argument...) Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. <sup>[4]</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. (Notice that Abraham had three days to argue with God, or at least plead his case; But does neither.) <sup>[5]</sup> And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." (Here is Abraham's confession of faith; And also his trust in God that He would keep the promise He made in **Genesis 18:18** that, "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.") <sup>[6]</sup> So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. <sup>[7]</sup> But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" <sup>[8]</sup> And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." (And that's exactly what happened, with John the Baptist saying in **John 1:29**, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"; And it goes on to say...) So the two of them went together. <sup>[9]</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. (Notice the faith of Isaac here; Just like his father, he said nothing; he believed in what his father told him; That God would provide [the] offering...) <sup>[10]</sup> And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>[11]</sup> But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." <sup>[12]</sup> And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear (and lit. 'reverence') God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." <sup>[13]</sup> Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>[14]</sup> And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided." <sup>[15]</sup> Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>[16]</sup> and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; <sup>[17]</sup> "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>[18]</sup> "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." <sup>NKJV</sup>

What Abraham didn't know was that, in God asking Abraham to sacrifice 'his only son', God was obligating Himself to do the same (since they were Covenant partners, and that's what the law demanded). That's why Jesus says in John 3:16...

**John 3:16** "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." <sup>NKJV</sup>

Not only was Abraham willing to sacrifice Isaac, But Abraham also believed for God to raise him from the dead.

**Heb 11:17-19** *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,* <sup>[18]</sup> *of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"* <sup>[19]</sup> *concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Abraham believing that God would raise Isaac from the dead, allowed God to do the same for His only begotten Son. This is what brought about *the resurrection of Christ, and redemption for all mankind!*

All of this was because of *Abraham's absolute faith in God;* Which was *not just faith for the moment,* but a '*faith for life*'. The apostle Paul explains...

**Rom 4:16-21** *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,* <sup>[17]</sup> *(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him (or 'in the sight of God, in) whom he [Abraham] believed, Even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.* <sup>[18]</sup> *Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.* <sup>[19]</sup> *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:* <sup>[20]</sup> *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;* <sup>[21]</sup> *And being fully persuaded that, what he [God] had promised, he was able also to perform.* <sup>KJV mod.</sup>

The New Living Translation says, in verses 19 through 22...

**Rom 4:19-22** *And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though he knew that he was too old to be a father at the age of one hundred and that Sarah, his wife, had never been able to have children.* <sup>[20]</sup> *Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.* <sup>[21]</sup> *He was absolutely convinced that God was able to do anything he promised.* <sup>[22]</sup> *And because of Abraham's faith, God declared him to be righteous.* <sup>NLT</sup>

That is what '*the life of faith*' looks like, and what God is looking for from each and every one of us.

## ¶ THE FAITH OF DANIEL (*A MAN OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITIES*)

The final example we will look at is Daniel's life as it relates to '*the life of faith (in God)*'.

Daniel's life is *totally different* to the two we've just looked at. On its own merit, it has so much to teach us about 'living by faith', and by extension, 'the life of faith'.

In fact, it was Daniel's *great 'faith in God'* resulted in him interpreting dreams, deciphering the '*writing on the wall*' (*made by the finger of God*), receiving angelic end-time prophecies (*involving Michael the archangel*), and so much more.

Why did Daniel have such *exceptional 'faith in God'*? We find the answer in 1<sup>st</sup> John chapter 3, verses 21 and 22, where the apostle John said...

**1 John 3:21-22** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence (and therefore, 'faith') toward God.<sup>[22]</sup> And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.<sup>NKJV</sup>

This was *the secret to Daniel's extraordinary life*, and also, *his great 'faith in God'*; *He did everything to live a life that was pleasing to God*. We find *evidence of this*, first, in Daniel chapter 1, where Daniel and his friends *refused to compromise their 'faith in God'*, and *subsequent beliefs*; And so it says there...

**Dan 1:8-20** But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.<sup>[9]</sup> Now God had brought Daniel into the favour and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.<sup>[10]</sup> And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."<sup>[11]</sup> So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,<sup>[12]</sup> "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.<sup>[13]</sup> Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."<sup>[14]</sup> So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.<sup>[15]</sup> And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.<sup>[16]</sup> Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.<sup>[17]</sup> As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.<sup>[18]</sup> Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>[19]</sup> Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.<sup>[20]</sup> And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.<sup>NKJV</sup>

God blessed them for making the choice to '*live a life*' that was '*pleasing in His sight*'; And it resulted in them *gaining the king's favour*, and being *promoted immediately*.

Added to this, we also know that Daniel *pleased God* by *praying three times a day*; Regardless of the consequences; It is this that leads to the next incident we're going to be looking at.

**Dan 6:1-4** *Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a prince to rule over each province.* <sup>[2]</sup> *The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the princes and to watch out for the king's interests.* <sup>[3]</sup> *Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and princes. Because of his great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.* <sup>[4]</sup> *Then the other administrators and princes began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling his affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize. He was faithful and honest and always responsible.* <sup>NLT</sup>

Here again we see the kind of lifestyle that makes it easy to have 'confidence toward God' (or 'faith in God'), and believe Him for both, His *provision*, and His *protection*.

**Dan 6:5-10** *So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the requirements of his religion."* <sup>[6]</sup> *So the administrators and princes went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius!"* <sup>[7]</sup> *We administrators, prefects, princes, advisers, and other officials have unanimously agreed that Your Majesty should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human--except to Your Majesty--will be thrown to the lions.* <sup>[8]</sup> *And let Your Majesty issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.* <sup>[9]</sup> *So King Darius signed the law.* <sup>[10]</sup> *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.* <sup>NLT</sup>

Once again, regardless of the consequences, *Daniel put God first*. Unashamedly praying to Him.

**Dan 6:13-17** *Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is paying no attention to you or your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."* <sup>[14]</sup> *Hearing this, the king was very angry with himself for signing the law, and he tried to find a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.* <sup>[15]</sup> *In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty knows that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."* <sup>[16]</sup> *So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you worship continually, rescue you."* <sup>[17]</sup> *A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel from the lions.* <sup>NLT</sup>

Notice two things about the way that someone, who has true 'faith in God', behaves.

First, Daniel doesn't try to make the king feel bad, or get him to jeopardise his position (as king) by asking him to break any laws.

Second. Daniel fearlessly places himself in God's hands, without once complaining, "Why are You letting this happen to me?"

Continuing on...

**Dan 6:18-24** Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night. <sup>[19]</sup> Very early the next morning, the king hurried out to the lions' den. <sup>[20]</sup> When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you worship continually, able to rescue you from the lions?" <sup>[21]</sup> Daniel answered, "Long live the king! <sup>[22]</sup> My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty." <sup>[23]</sup> The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him because he had trusted (lit. 'believed') in his God. <sup>[24]</sup> Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den. <sup>NLT</sup>

Once again, notice that Daniel simply believed in God. His faith was so great that he knew that there was nothing to be afraid of. Daniel not only pleased God, but he also did right by the king. As a result, all those who plotted against him, ended dying in the same way that they had planned for him.

## § THE HEROES OF FAITH (OF HEBREWS 11)

We will conclude this series by looking at the different things faith in needed for, and the various ways faith is exercised. This is found in Hebrews chapter 11 (*which is known as the Great Faith Hall of Fame*).

**Heb 11:1-2** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. <sup>[2]</sup> For by it (that is, 'by faith') the elders obtained a good testimony. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we are introduced to the 'faith' of the elders, or literally, 'the heroes of old'. We see that it is 'by faith' that they received 'divine approval' <sup>Amp</sup> and thus, obtained a 'good report', <sup>KJV</sup> (...meaning that without faith, none of this would have been possible).

Continuing, it says...

**Heb 11:3** By faith we understand that the worlds were framed (and 'formed', <sup>NIV/NLT</sup>) by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see how 'faith' is required to *believe* that everything we see was created by God (*not evolution*), and that it's beginning was not anything in the seen realm (*such as the*

'big bang'), but in an unseen realm; A realm *invisible* to the naked eye, and *why faith is required*.

William MacDonald: “Faith provides us with the only factual account of creation. God is the only One who was there; He tells us how it happened. We believe His word and thus we know.”<sup>1</sup>

Continuing on to Hebrews 11:4, it goes on to talk about the faith of Abel.

**Heb 11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Abel's offering was better than Cain's because Abel offered his 'by faith', while Cain did not. Abel's heart was right before God, while Cain's wasn't. In all our giving, we must do it 'by faith', and of course, with the right heart. Only then will we *please God*, and receive *His blessing* on it.

F. F. Bruce: “...sacrifice is acceptable to God not for its material content, but insofar as it is the outward expression of a devoted and obedient heart.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Spirit Filled Bible*: “Abel's act of worship still testifies to the fact that a true worshiper must come in faith, presenting the sacrifice required by God.”<sup>3</sup>

Next is the faith of Enoch.

**Heb 11:5-6** By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. <sup>[6]</sup> But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.<sup>NKJV</sup>

In the case of Enoch, his reward was to be 'translated', and never see death; Something we can, and should, aim for.

Next, we see the faith of Noah.

**Heb 11:7** By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen (referring to the coming flood), moved with godly fear (here is faith's corresponding action) , prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.<sup>NKJV</sup>

We need 'faith' to believe in 'things unseen' in the past (such as creation), and for 'things unseen' in the future (in Noah's case – the flood).

<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2195

<sup>2</sup> F.F. Bruce, “*The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews*” Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.281

<sup>3</sup> *Spirit Filled Life Bible (NKJV)*. *A Personal Study Bible Unveiling All God's Fullness In All God's Word*. General Editor Jack W. Hayford, Litt.D. Copyright © 1991 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.1885

From Genesis chapter 2, we know that it had never rained on the earth before this time.

**Gen 2:5b-6** *For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; <sup>[6]</sup> but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

It is likely that, for 120 years, as Noah built the Ark on dry land (in the middle of nowhere), he must have been teased and ridiculed constantly. Yet he never complained or wavered.

William MacDonald: “Noah’s faith was rewarded: his household was saved, the world was condemned by his life and testimony, and he became [an] heir of righteousness which is received on the basis of faith. [MacDonald continues...] Perhaps many of the early Jewish Christians to whom this letter was written often wondered why, if they were right, they were such a small minority. Noah steps out from the pages of the Old Testament to remind them that in his day, only eight people were right and all the rest of the world perished!”<sup>1</sup>

Continuing on, Hebrews 11, verses 8 through 19, talks about the faith of Abraham and Sarah.

**Heb 11:8** *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

F. F. Bruce: “Abraham’s faith was manifested first of all by the readiness with which he left his home at the call of God, for the promise of a new home which he had never seen before and which, even after he entered it, he never possessed in person.”<sup>2</sup>

William MacDonald: “The walk of faith often gives the impression to others of being imprudent and reckless, but the man who knows God, is content to be led blindfolded, not knowing the route ahead.”<sup>3</sup>

Continuing on, Hebrews 11:9 goes on to say...

**Heb 11:9-10** *By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac [his son] and Jacob [his grandson], the heirs with him of the same promise; <sup>[10]</sup> for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* <sup>NKJV</sup>

Abraham did not have his heart set on present, material things, but on the eternal; In this case, a city planned and built by God.

Hebrews 11:11, goes on to talk about the faith of Sarah.

<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2196

<sup>2</sup> F.F. Bruce, “*The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews*” Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.291

<sup>3</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2196

**Heb 11:11** By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. <sup>NKJV</sup>

We see how *faith* is required to *look past* our natural, physical inabilities, and *rely entirely on God's promises*, in order to *fulfil God's will*. We know that Sarah had to believe for herself. Abraham couldn't do it for her. And Abraham *couldn't have a child with Sarah until she received, and acted on, the promise herself*.

Continuing on to Hebrews 11:17, it goes on to say that...

**Heb 11:17-19** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, <sup>[18]</sup> of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," <sup>[19]</sup> concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. <sup>NKJV</sup>

We see how faith is required to look beyond what is asked, to what will result from doing what is asked; One commentator states, “Even though Abraham was now 117, and Sarah was 108, he knew what God had promised; A great host of descendants was to be fulfilled in Isaac; And that was all that mattered. And so, he concluded that if God required him to slay his son, then God would raise him from the dead to fulfil the promise.”<sup>1</sup>

Continuing on, Hebrews 11:20 now goes on talk about the faith of Isaac.

**Heb 11:20** By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. <sup>NKJV</sup>

To understand what this saying, we need to know Genesis 25:23, where it said...

**Gen 25:23** And the LORD said to [Rebekah]: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger." <sup>NKJV</sup>

Even though Isaac loved Esau more than Jacob, and was tricked into blessing Jacob with Esau's blessing (*which was the blessing of the first-born*), Isaac, ‘by faith’ (*having believed what God had said: that ‘the older shall serve the younger’*), against all his natural instincts, let the blessing stand.

Continuing on to Hebrews 11:21, talking about the faith of Jacob, it says there...

**Heb 11:21** By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. <sup>NKJV</sup>

Here, the faith that was required was to *obey God's will, despite the natural order of things*. Jacob (*led by God*), crossed his hands so that the older son's blessing fell on the younger and vice versa (*in spite of all of Joseph's protests (Gen. 48:14-20)*).

Next we see the faith of Joseph.

<sup>1</sup> From: William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2197

**Heb 11:22** By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see how *faith in God* was required to, not only *trust* that the children of Israel would actually return to the promised land, but also that, somebody would actually *remember* to dig up his bones and *transport them all the way back to Canaan!*

Continuing on to Hebrews 11:23, we now see *the faith of Moses' parents.*

**Heb 11:23** By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child (lit. 'a child of destiny'); and they were not afraid of the king's command.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Moses' parents, had *faith* to *defy the ungodly authorities of the time*, and *risked their lives* to hide him, because they *perceived* that God had a special plan, and destiny, for his life.

Continuing on, we now come to *the faith of Moses.*

**Heb 11:24-26** By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called (and 'treated as',<sup>NLT</sup>) the son of Pharaoh's daughter,<sup>[25]</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,<sup>[26]</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see how *faith* is required to fight the *temptations* of 'fame' and 'status'. It's what's *required* to walk away from living a life of '*ease*' and '*comfort*', and *refuse* temporal treasures, in favour of *eternal wealth and blessing*.

Continuing on, *still talking about Moses*, it says there...

**Heb 11:27** By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see a classic example of 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:7 ('For *we walk by faith, not by sight*'). Faith was required to 'look beyond the visible and tangible to the invisible and intangible,' and 'courageously serve God.' And in the case of Moses: *his leading of Israel out of Egypt against the kings wishes* ('not fearing the wrath of the king').

John MacArthur: "Moses' faith was such that he responded to God's commands as though God were standing visibly before him. This was the basis for his loyalty to God, and it should be a believer's example for loyalty."<sup>1</sup>

Continuing on, and still talking about Moses...

**Heb 11:28** By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Faith was required to believe in God's *protection* for your family, and God's *judgement* for your enemies. In this particular case, that '*the angel of death*' (God's judgment) would

<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur, Published in Nashville, Tennessee by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing. p.1871

only affect the Egyptians, and not the Israelites, ‘*passing over*’ all the Israelites’ door-posts that were ‘sprinkled with blood’.

Following this, it goes on to give one last act of faith ascribed to Moses.

**Heb 11:29** By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see that faith was required on three occasions:

First, the faith required to be willing to go forward at God’s Word, even though it seemed impossible to get across;

Second, the faith required to walk across the dry land, and not be overcome by fear at the sight of the sea on either side, ready to crash in on them at any time;

Third, the faith required to believe that, once they were across, the same sea that God held back for them, would be released on Pharaoh and his armies, putting an end to the threat, once-and-for-all.

William MacDonald writes: “Thus the Red Sea became a causeway of deliverance to Israel but a dead end of doom to the Egyptians.”<sup>1</sup>

Another example of faith is seen in Hebrews 11:30...

**Heb 11:30** By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see how faith was required to follow God’s instructions to the letter, and do something that seemed incredibly foolish, no matter how ridiculous it looked and sounded; And not by just one person, but the entire nation of Israel; Without grumbling or complaining.

Continuing on, we now see the faith of Rahab, in Hebrews 11:31.

**Heb 11:31** By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.<sup>NKJV</sup>

Here we see the faith required to stand against your own country, and choose to be on the Lord’s side; Even if it means risking everything to do so. In Rahab’s case, she risked her life by welcoming the spies, giving them lodging overnight, hiding them from the authorities, and lying to the king’s soldiers (by misleading them), and allowing the spies to escape unharmed.

The writer of Hebrews could share with us, so many more examples of faith, and ways that faith can be used, Time, however, was an issue. And so he simply says...

**Heb 11:32-40** And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon (who, at God’s instructions, defeated about 135'000 Midianite soldiers with just 300

<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2199

men) and Barak (who refused to go into battle unless God's servant and spokeswoman, Deborah, was with him) and Samson (who made an incredible come-back and killed more Philistines in his death, than he had in his life) and Jephthah (who, rose above his station [of being an illegitimate child] to become the deliverer of his people from the Ammonites), also of David (who defeated Goliath) and Samuel (who was the last of the Judges, and first of the Prophets) and the prophets (such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and so on): <sup>[33]</sup> who through faith subdued kingdoms (as Joshua and the Judges did), worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions (as Daniel's faith in God did), <sup>[34]</sup> quenched the violence of fire (as Daniel's contemporaries, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, did), escaped the edge of the sword (such as Elisha when surrounded by the Syrian army), out of weakness were made strong (...such as Gideon who said in **Judges 6:15**, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.", and ended up defeating the Midianites as we saw before), became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. <sup>[35]</sup> Women received their dead raised to life again (such as the widow of Zarephath [1 Kings 17:22] and the woman of Shunem (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 4:34)). And others were tortured (referring to the Maccabean martyrs <sup>1</sup>), not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. <sup>[36]</sup> Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment (Jeremiah endured all these forms of punishment [Jer. 20:1-6, Jer. 37:15]). <sup>[37]</sup> They were stoned (referring to Zechariah [Mat. 23:35]), they were sawn in two (referring to Isaiah <sup>2</sup>), were tempted (such as Joseph who refused the advances of Potiphar's wife [Gen. 39:11-20]), were slain with the sword (referring again to the time of the Maccabees). They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; <sup>[38]</sup> of whom the world was not worthy (So, while the world treated them as if they were not worthy to live; In truth, it was the exact opposite, and that is: The world was not worthy of them). They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. <sup>[39]</sup> And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith (...from Abel, to all those whose faith was so nobly manifested on the very eve of the coming of Christ...), did not receive the promise (that is, even though they did obtain many 'promises' of God; Still, none of them received 'the' promise, of the coming Messiah), <sup>[40]</sup> God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. <sup>NKJV</sup>

In other words, now that the coming of the Messiah has been fulfilled, in his commentary, F. F. Bruce says that: "...the age of the New Covenant has dawned; 'the Christ' to whose day they looked forward, has come, and by His self-offering and His high-priestly ministry in the presence of God, He has procured perfection for them – and for us. [*The New English Bible* says:] 'With this in mind, God had made a better plan, that only in

<sup>1</sup> In the time of the Maccabees, a mother and her seven sons were tortured and put to death, one after the other, and in sight of each other, by Antiochus Epiphanes because they refused to compromise their faith, and yield to the idolatrous requirements of the king: In 2<sup>nd</sup> *Macc.* 7:9 they say: "You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for His Laws".

<sup>2</sup> Tradition says that Manasseh used this method of executing Isaiah (William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary – A Complete Bible Commentary In One Volume*, © 1995, 1992, 1990, 1989 by William MacDonald. All rights reserved. Thomas Nelson, Inc. P.O. Box 141000, Nashville, Tennessee 37214-1000. p.2201)

*company with us, should they reach their perfection'. (F. F. Bruce continues...) They and we together now enjoy unrestricted access to God through Christ, as fellow-citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. The 'better plan' which God has made embraces the better hope, the better promises, the better covenant, the better sacrifices, the better and abiding possession, and the better resurrection which is their heritage, and ours."*<sup>1</sup>

Hebrews 11 is an incredible chapter. It teaches us so much about 'faith in God'; And all so that we can learn from those that have gone before us, and not only receive inspiration and courage from what they've done, but also, aim to do better;

Especially since we now are '*born of God*', and '*filled with the Spirit*', and have 'a better Covenant, built on better Promises'!

This is what the writer of Hebrews was referring to when he said again in Hebrews 10:38 (*quoting Habakkuk 2:4*<sup>2</sup>) ...

**Heb 10:38** *Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.*"<sup>NKJV</sup>

And why he went on to say in Hebrews 11:6...

**Heb 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

Faith requires us to look beyond the natural, and to the supernatural, miraculous, and the impossible, if we are ever going to escape the confines of this world and its systems, and live an exceptional and extraordinary life. This is why the apostle Paul says in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:7, that it is crucial that we learn to...

**2 Cor 5:7b** ...*walk by faith, not by sight.*<sup>NKJV</sup>

That's the key to a limitless life, and why Jesus said in Mark 9:23...

**Mark 9:23b** "*If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.*"<sup>NKJV</sup>

And the only requirement to walk in all this is to be born again, and why the apostle John says in 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4...

**1 John 5:4** *For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world: Our faith.*<sup>KJV mod.</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> F.F. Bruce, "The New International Commentary on the New Testament – The Epistle To The Hebrews" Revised. © 1990 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. p.330

<sup>2</sup> **Hab 2:4** "*Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.*"<sup>NKJV</sup>

