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ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH

By Joshua Stauffer

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BOOK JACKET TEXTS

About The Author

Joshua Stauffer entered Union Bible Seminary as a student at an early age. His aptness to learn and ability to convey Bible truths to others convinced his teachers that he had the gift of teaching, and he was soon engaged as an instructor in the Seminary.

After several years spent in pastoral and evangelistic work which has taken him into several states and to many camp meetings, he is again a teacher in Union Bible Seminary, serving also as pastor of the church connected with the school. His calls for evangelistic work in churches and camp meetings far exceed his ability to respond.

He combines in a remarkable degree the gifts of teaching, pastoral work, and evangelism. With all his other gifts he is also an instructive writer, as this volume demonstrates.

William H. Smith,
Superintendent of Union Bible Seminary,
Westfield, Indiana.

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About The Book By The Author

Faith lifts us up into the realm in which God lives and operates. When we believe God Who dwells in the present, the past, and the future, He will bring the future and what is not into the present and the actual. The Lord said to Abraham, "I will," (future tense), then "I am" (present tense), then He said, "I have" (past tense). To God all was an accomplished fact. Abraham believed God, but had to wait several years for the fulfillment of His promises; however, through faith he had the evidence of things not seen.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence, of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Hope has to do with the future, the unseen and the unpossessed blessing. Faith brings the evidence into the present and accepts things from God as settled, actual and final. The evidence of our faith is God's Word. God can not lie. He will keep His Word at all costs. His Word is more true than what we see and feel.

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PREFACE

Faith is possible unto all people. God is just in demanding faith in Him and in His Word. There is only one thing that all men of all time can do, that is, to believe. Faith in Christ is the only condition on which men can be saved. He does not ask for money or merit, for that would exclude all people. The rich and the poor; the young and the aged; the educated and the uneducated; the Jews and the Gentiles, and the weak and the strong, all can and may believe. This makes redemption, the forgiveness of sins and the obtaining of eternal life possible unto all men. Since it is impossible to please God without believing Him, it is the desire and prayer of the author of this book that all who read may have their faith increased, and thereby please the Lord better.

Joshua Stauffer
Westfield, Indiana

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01 -- MEANING OF FAITH

Many definitions and illustrations of faith have been given. The Bible is the best book on faith. By reading the Bible, we get the best inspiration to increase our faith, the best definitions of faith, find the best examples of faith, the best illustrations of faith and read of the greatest characters of faith.

I. Faith Is The Substance Of Things Hoped For

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

This verse has been explained in various ways. It is the only inspired definition of faith. It defines faith in its effect more than it does in its essence. Faith believes what it does not see. It makes the unseen, the heavenly, the spiritual and the eternal things real to us. It is well to understand the terms employed which express faith. The word "substance" means, something placed under, that is a basis or foundation, which in its application means, assured expectation, a confident anticipation. This connects with the "things hoped for" even a firm persuasion. Wakefield states it thus: "Faith is the confident anticipation of things hoped for, the firm persuasion of things not seen."

II. Faith Is Counting Him Faithful Who Had Promised

"She judged Him faithful Who had promised" (Heb. 11:11).

Sarah judged rightly. God is faithful to do all He has promised. God is faithful to Himself, to His promises and to His children. When God makes a promise, He will fulfill it even if He has to perform a miracle to do so. God can perform miracles more easily than we can breathe. God had promised a son to Abraham and Sarah. Sarah had been barren and passed the change in life and Abraham was stricken with old age. This did not hinder God in the least. He promised them a son and their part was to believe it, and God's part, to be faithful in performing what He had promised. Abraham's faith was firm. Sarah wavered and was possessed with doubts. However, she, too, came to the place that she believed, yes, judged, that is, counted, decided and acknowledged that God Who had promised, would be faithful to all He had promised. Faith is judging, deciding, counting and acknowledging God as faithful and not failing on His Part.

III. Faith is Accounting God as Being Able,

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac... accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Hob. 11:19).

Sarah judged God as faithful and Abraham accounted Him as able. In this, both were right, God is faithful and able. Account means to estimate, to hold in opinion, and to figure up. When the Lord called on Abraham to offer Isaac, he obeyed without faltering, or asking any reasons why he should do so. Abraham knew that the Lord knew why He wanted him to offer up his son. This satisfied Abraham and he reverently obeyed. Abraham reasoned correctly that if he offered Isaac, there was absolutely no other way for God to fulfill His promises and to keep His word than to raise Isaac up out of the ashes and restore him back to him. Abraham had it all figured up, and the answer to his "accounting" was, "God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." That was faith. Faith accounts God as being able to do as He has promised.

IV. Faith is Firm, Expectation Free from all Doubts

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7).

The condition on which God grants blessings and answers our prayers is faith. The person who fluctuates in his faith, that is, wavereth is like a ship on the sea in a storm. Faith and unbelief are not compatible. They do not mix. The one which is the stronger will overcome the other. Faith will kill unbelief, or unbelief will kill faith. The truth of God will kill unbelief and recover faith. Faith is the firm expectation free from doubts. When we consider the faithfulness, the ability and the willingness of God to fulfill His promises, we have every reason to believe Him and not one to doubt Him. Our expectation should be free from all doubt.

V. Faith is the Reckoning of Things as Ours Already

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14, 15).

If our wills are in unity with His will, we can have what we will. If we want what God wants us to have, we can have what we want. A holy desire needs to accompany faith in our asking. Asking according to His will gives us confidence, which means, boldness. Prayers offered outside the will of God are not offered in faith, therefore, God does not hear them, that is, to answer prayers. Prayers offered with desires, in faith, in the will of God, in confidence and with knowledge will positively be answered. John says, "We have the petitions that we desire of him." "We have" is past tense. Faith will give us confidence, knowledge and a sweet assurance of receiving what we have asked for, as if we had the answer already in our possession. God lives in the past, the present and future. Faith lifts up into the realm in which God dwells and operates. The future is as the present and the past. Faith reckons things as ours already.

VI. Faith is the Unhesitating Assurance of the Fulfillment of God's Promise

"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: he staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:19-21).

Abraham was not weak in faith; did not consider his own body; did not consider the barrenness and deadness of Sarah's womb, neither did he stagger at the promises of God. But he was strong in faith and was fully persuaded that God was able to give him a son of himself and Sarah. He lived and believed God as though he already had the fulfillment. Before Isaac was born, God said, "for a father of many nations have I made thee." The future had become as the past to God. It was a settled fact with God, and Abraham also believed and accepted it as such because God had said so. Faith gave Abraham the assurance of the fulfillment of God's promises. Children have great faith in their parents. When they make a promise to them, they believe their parents will fulfill their promise. They expect it, accept it as a settled fact and wait for it with a restful assurance, even as if they already possessed the promised gift. This is faith.

VII. Faith is Taking God at His Word

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie. promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

Faith is the taking of God at His Word, It is simply believing what He has said. Faith is a belief with an evidence. We have the very best of evidence, that is, God's Word, God cannot lie. He will keep His Word. The Word of God is quick and powerful. There is power in His Word. God operates through His Word. When He wants to do anything, He does it through speaking -- saying words. When we obey and believe His Word, that couples us with God and the employment of His power.

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02 -- FAITH IS AN ALL TIME CONDITION

Faith is possible unto all people. When the Lord stipulated faith as an all-time condition on which sinners are saved, He chose a condition which is possible to all people. Some people are gifted along one line and others along some other line; however, when it comes to believing, it is possible that all may believe Him. God's demands are reasonable and just. He is to be trusted. People dare to believe Him because of His great love, His ability, His faithfulness and His righteousness. He is true to His own Word. It honors Him when people take Him at His Word. He will do exactly as He has promised. The final step in obtaining salvation is faith. When the right conditions are met, they will lead to faith. These conditions are confession, the forsaking of sins, repentance and restitution. Doing these will not save any one, but they will lead to faith which is the final step to salvation. It is. faith in Christ which moves Him to save sinners.

I. The Believer Shall Not Perish

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Salvation or damnation depends on the attitude we take toward Christ and the cross, that is, whether we will believe Christ died and arose, or not. God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son, the Son gave His life, now God offers salvation freely on the condition of faith. The whole question of salvation hangs on believing. Working has nothing to do with it, for God has done it all. God has not gone into partnership with man to redeem men, for He does it all. God does a negative and a positive work for a believer. Regeneration is one work of grace, however, it is twofold in its nature. The negative work is, "shall not perish," this is, the forgiveness of sins and saves from going to hell. The positive work is "shall have everlasting life," which is the impartation of new life, a new birth, which saves to go to heaven.

II. The Believer Has Everlasting Life

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:30).

Everlasting life is a present possession. It is obtained on condition of believing and is obtained the instant a person believes. It is not obtained at the time of death, nor after death, but at the moment faith in the Son of God is exercised. The believer obtains everlasting life, and the unbeliever who rejects Christ will bring on himself a wrath that is ever abiding. Everlasting life, or life which will last ever, comes through faith, and everlasting wrath (eternal death) which is death also will last for ever, comes through unbelief. Everlasting life is more than an ever existence, it is a special quality of life, even the quality of life Christ possesses. Of necessity it must be ever enduring. Eternal wrath (death, destruction, separation) is not the extinction of being, but a conscious existence of eternal separation, death, destruction, suffering and torments.

III. The Believer is a Son of God

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on His name" (John 1:12).

The very instant a believer receives Christ and believes He is the Son of God, that instant Christ will receive him and make him a son of God. The condition is faith, even a faith which receives Him as the Son of God. This is the condition for "any" and for "many." There is no restriction here, for the "as many" takes in not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles, however, the condition never varies, but is ever the same.

IV. The Believer Shall not Come into Condemnation

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

This is a blessed text. Hearing and believing are the conditions to receive eternal life. With the gift of everlasting life, comes deliverance from eternal condemnation. Faith tends to life and unbelief to death. Hearing and believing go together. Faith cometh through hearing the words of the Son of God. Attention (hearing) must be given to the gospel and assentation (believing) be given to Christ. The believer "hath everlasting life" which is a charter of pardon, and he "shall not come into condemnation," which is a discharge from the curse of sin.

V. The Believer Shall be Saved with His House

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

Salvation is an individual matter; however, God has ordained that salvation shall go by the household. It always must begin with one in the family. God always saves a sinner with a twofold objective, that of saving someone else through him. Every Christian should reproduce himself. The fruit of a Christian is another Christian. Salvation needs to begin at home, with our

own. If the Lord can save one in a family and that one remains faithful, He will use that one to the salvation of the household. This has worked many times when that one remained faithful, and it has failed when the one first converted became unfaithful. First, the individual must believe for his own personal salvation, then exercise faith in God for the salvation of the rest in that family.

VI. The Believer Possesses a Powerful Gospel

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

Paul became ashamed of his former life, but he never became ashamed of the gospel. He knew what the gospel had done for him and also for every one that believed the gospel. The gospel came from Christ. Paul was not ashamed of Christ because of Who He was; because of His relationship to God; because of whence He came; because of what He did, and because of His position. There is greater power in the gospel of Christ than there is in electricity, steam, waterfalls, iron chains, armies and navies, in prison walls, or in handcuffs. None of these can change a sinner and make a saint out of him, but the gospel of Christ has changed and transformed many lives and made choice saints out of vile sinners. The believer possesses a powerful gospel of which he never needs to be ashamed.

VII. The Believer Never Needs be Ashamed

"For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:11-13).

The Scriptures teach that whosoever believeth on Christ shall not make haste (Isa. 28:16), shall not be ashamed (Rom. 10:11), and shall not be confounded (I Pet.. 2:6). The words "haste, confounded," and "ashamed" are rich in their meaning. Faith in Christ is a good cure for a troubled heart (John 14:1). Faith calms the soul and soothes the fears. It is like oil poured on troubled waters. Those who trust in Christ need not be frustrated nor agitated, neither will they be bewildered or disappointed. There is nothing to be ashamed of in believing on Christ, or in being a Christian. God is not ashamed of Himself, of what He has done and will do; neither is He ashamed of those who believe on Him. He is not ashamed to be called the God of the believers. He will be ashamed of all who are ashamed of Him; therefore, shame will be the portion of all who are ashamed of Christ.

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03 -- EVANGELICAL FAITH DEFINED

Evangelical faith is the only condition on which we can be saved, and it is the faith which keeps us saved. This is the term fixed by God and is just, reasonable, and possible unto every man. God will not change the term. When men come to the term God has fixed, God will do business with men. We are saved through faith. Faith is the channel through which the Holy Spirit operates, and the channel through which we receive salvation and all blessings. God

suggests faith, and Satan suggests doubt and fear. Faith is believing God, and doubt is believing Satan. Believing Christ brings victory, and believing Satan brings defeat. When a soul is seeking salvation, God is there and Satan will be there also. A great battle will be on and it will be concerning the possession of the seeking soul. Either Christ or Satan will win and gain that soul. Man decides that important question. Faith involves the will -- yes, a surrendered will unto God. Therefore, evangelical faith obeys God's ways. Seven suggestions follow which reveal how evangelical faith makes itself manifest.

I. It is a Faith Which Calls Upon the Lord

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

This truth is stated as positively as a fact can be stated. It is as true as God is true, and will come to pass as truly as it is recorded in the Bible, when it is complied with. Several things are implied or inferred: 1. A deep recognition that we are lost and are in perishing need of salvation. 2. An earnest desire to be saved. 3. It acknowledges Christ is our only Savior, therefore, our only hope of salvation. 4. A hope that Christ will save us. It is a call of confession, desire, hope and faith. This call will be heard and answered by the Lord in saving the caller.

II. It is Believing from the Heart

"If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him (Christ) from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

This is evangelical faith, even a belief in the Savior that He died and arose again for our salvation. Evangelical faith is a heart faith. This faith is distinguished from a historical, an intellectual, or head faith. The heart corresponds with the spirit or the inward man. The heart involves the thoughts, will, feelings, and emotions. Such a faith leads to action, acts what it believes, and manifests itself in outward conduct.

III. It is a Faith Which Believes that Christ Died and Rose from the Dead

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

Christ died and rose as the Savior of all men. Evangelical faith accepts this accomplishment for personal salvation. It accepts the Deity of Christ. It accepts the propitiatory death of Christ. It accepts the intercession of Christ; the ability of Christ to save us; His willingness to save us, therefore, renounces self and accepts God's way and the accomplishments of Christ, for that is why He died.

IV. It is a Faith Which Believes Christ Can, Will, Does, and Has Forgiven Our Sins

"And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven... Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:48, 50).

On the divine side, God is reconciled to man. Every person's sins have been atoned for, the price or penalty has been paid. The seeker for salvation needs to come to the place that he actually believes his sins are forgiven by the Lord which will place the believer on the side of the saved. It is no effort for many people to believe that Christ can forgive their sins. Those who believe He can forgive their sins are on believing ground. Each individual must believe in Christ for himself. First, believe and say, "Christ can forgive my sins." This leads to the next step. Second, say, "I believe Christ will forgive my sins." This is making progress. Next, say, "I believe Christ does forgive my sins now." Then take another step and say, "I believe Christ has forgiven my sins." Such faith will not be disappointed. The Lord will honor it and actually forgive sins when the believer's faith has progressed from the future tense into the present tense and has gone into the past tense. He will have crossed the line from sin over into salvation, for as a believer he will be on the side of the redeemed.

V. It is a Faith Which Receives Jesus Christ

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12).

Christ offers Himself as the Sin-bearer and Savior of all men. When the sinner truly accepts Christ as his Savior, the Savior accepts him as His child. The instant the sinner accepts Christ, that instant Christ accepts the sinner. Christ said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." Evangelical, or saving faith is the faith that accepts Christ in all that He has done, in all He is and in all that He can do.

VI. It is a Faith Which Commits Self to Christ

"Wherefore He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him" (II Tim. 1:12).

Evangelical faith leads the repentant sinner to give himself to Christ. There will be a full surrender to Him to be forever attached to Him and to be forever detached from Satan, sin and the world. It submits self to Christ, gives self to Him to be His property, to be in His hands. It abandons self so fully to Christ, that from henceforth He will have him on His hands, to be His servant and to yield allegiance to Him.

VII. It is a Faith that Confesses Christ as Savior

"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:8-10).

The heart and the mouth both need to be employed in getting saved and in keeping saved. Believing and confessing go together in getting saved. We believe with the heart and confess with the mouth. The heart believes Christ died and rose again for personal salvation and the mouth confesses Christ has saved us.

Two confessions are essential in getting saved. The first confession is that of personal sins to the Lord, and the second confession, that Christ has saved us, that we have accepted Him, that we are Christians and He is our Saviour. Every person after he is saved owes the second confession to Christ, to all Christians, to himself and to all sinners, that is, his former associates.

Any sinner who will earnestly call on the Lord and say, "Lord, I am a sinner, I am lost; be merciful and save; I will forsake sin; I do believe that Thou hast died and risen for my salvation; I accept Thee as: my Savior and believe with all of my heart that Thou art saving me now, yea, that Thou hast saved me," may get up and make a confession before the Lord, the Christian people and all sinners as follows: "I have accepted Christ as my Savior and He saves me now. I am a Christian and am forever done with sin and the world." Such a testimony will bring joy to the heart of the believer.

Dr. S. A. Keen related that during a revival in one of his churches there was a man who was a regular attendant, and exemplary in his morals, who read and studied the Bible. For twenty years he desired to be saved. He had a wrong notion that the faith which saved is the gift of God and he had to wait for God to give him faith so he could be saved. Dr. Keen had occasion to remark during a sermon: "Jesus says, 'Trust Me, I will save you, and you say, 'I can trust Thee precious Savior; Thou hast died for me.'" That remark led the man to see he had been waiting for faith to be given, while the Lord had been waiting all these years for him to put faith in Him. After the service he came to him with a bright face, taking his hand he said, "Jesus has saved me." He asked, "When?" "Oh, just a few minutes ago. I had been waiting for God to give me faith. When you said, 'Jesus says, Trust Me, and I will save you' I saw that for twenty years I had been waiting for God to put faith into me, when He had been waiting all these years for me to put faith in His Word." He was very happy for it was the day of his salvation.

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04 -- ATTITUDES OF FAITH

In time of pressure and testing, character will unconsciously reveal itself. True faith will conduct itself properly, yes, in a perfect manner. When the Lord led Israel out of Egypt by the hand of Moses, He led them via the wilderness, in a southeasterly direction and not by the direct and short route to Canaan. The Lord led the people directly to the Red Sea. The Sea was before them, the mountains on one side and the wilderness on the other side, then Pharaoh and his army overtook them from the rear. God knew what He would do. This was to result in a great deliverance for Israel and a great defeat for Pharaoh. The people greatly feared and chided with Moses. Then Moses gave the courageous and prophetic utterance contained in Exodus 14:13, 14. From this incident as taken from Exodus 14, we learn there are seven steps of faith. These should be observed in their logical order. We learn from this order that one step leads to the next step.

I. Calmness

"Fear ye not" (Ex. 14:13).

"Fear ye not" is the first attitude to take. This is God's command and God's order. He comforts first, then removes the cause for fear. The order in the natural realm is reverse to God's order which is the way of faith. Calmness should be the first attitude of faith. Calmness is a freedom from motion, agitation or disturbance. The souls of many people are like the sea. When the winds of adversity blow, they become disturbed, troubled and unsettled. In time of trouble God would have His people to be composed, steady and tranquil. God has a "Fear not" for all of His redeemed people in every time of trouble. The first attitude to take is to be calm in the soul. This will enable the Christian to take the next logical step.

II. Quietness

"Stand still" (Ex. 14:13).

In time of emergency it is as well to know what not to do as it is to know what to do. In a hasty attitude and a frustrated spirit there is danger of saying, or doing the wrong thing. When a calm attitude has been pursued, and the attitude of quietness followed, the Christian will be in a right attitude to take the next rightful step.

III. Expectancy

"See the salvation of the Lord" (Ex. 14:13).

The Christian has a right to expect the help of the Lord and the Lord has commanded the Christian to take that course, Faith in the firm expectation of help and blessings from the Lord. Faith has a right to expect things from the Lord. Moreover, faith will not be disappointed, neither will the Lord disappoint faith. Faith sees the salvation (deliverance) of the Lord.

IV. Submission

"He (God, not you) will show to you" (Ex. 14:13). "The fourth attitude of faith is submission, the taking of our hands off and leaving all in the hands of the Lord. When we take our hands off, God will take the case into His own hands. When we take the case in our own hands and try to manage our affairs, God will take His hands off. Submission to God is one of the greatest lessons we can learn in the Christian life. Moses assured the people, "The Lord shall fight for you."

V. Prayer

"Moses cried unto the Lord" (See Ex. 14:15).

To be able to pray fervently and effectually requires a soul preparation and the taking of a rightful attitude before the Lord. The inference is that after Moses had given the splendid instruction to the people contained in Exodus 14:13 and 14, between verses 14 and 15 he did some tremendous praying. It also seems the Lord answered him immediately. Many in time of emergency rush to the Lord in prayer, their souls are agitated, they have not been still and calm

in their souls before the Lord, and their expectation in the Lord is very uncertain, because they have not taken the attitude of submission before the Lord. This hinders their faith and prayers.

VI. Obedience

"Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward" (Ex. 14:15).

The Lord revealed His will to Israel what they should do. Obedience runs parallel to faith. These two elements go together and are inseparable. Faith is contingent on obedience. In fact, obedience is one of the attitudes of faith. When the element of obedience is lacking, faith does not operate and absolutely can not until obedience acts.

VII. Action

"Lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea" (Ex. 14:16).

When the will of the Lord has been revealed, then we need to put into action our own prayer. God will do what man can not do, but man must do what man can do.' The question has been asked, Is there ever a time when prayer is out of place? This question might be answered with a No, and a Yes with some explanation. Christ said, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." This does not mean that men should do nothing but pray, even to the exclusion of eating, working or sleeping. It means men should be regular in praying and be in a prayerful attitude. There is a time to pray, then there follows a time to obey the Lord and to work for the Lord. When the Lord has revealed His will, when duty has been left undone, and when action is necessary, we need to move forward. The Lord said to Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." Moses had prayed and met every condition and God's time had come for Israel to go forward, even through the sea. For Moses to have lingered before the sea and continued crying unto the Lord would not have been praying, but an act of disobedience.

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05 -- ATTITUDES OF UNBELIEF

Faith conducts itself in a wholesome, becoming and wise manner, which leads to victory, but unbelief conducts itself in an unwholesome, unbecoming and foolish manner which leads to defeat.

I. Looking Back

"Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them" (Ex. 14:10).

Faith looks forward, upward and to God. Unbelief looks backward, downward and to the hindering causes in life. It is true, Israel was hemmed in with the Sea before, Pi-hahiroth, a range of craggy impassable rocks on one hand, and on the other hand, were Migdol and Baalzephon,

which some think were forts and garrisons on the Egyptian frontier, and Pharaoh and his army in the rear. However, God led them there and was with them. He had redeemed them from Egypt and they were His people. They looked back on the Egyptian army when they should have looked up to their God and Redeemer. Looking back has caused many people to get into trouble. It is an attitude of unbelief.

II. Fearfulness

"And they were sore afraid" (Ex. 14:10).

Israel became afraid at what they saw. They should have looked up to God who was present in the cloudy and fiery pillar by day and by night. They were in His hands and on His hands, therefore, were safe in His keeping. It later became known that He graciously delivered them. They had nothing to fear. Their fears were needless. Unbelief expresses itself in fearfulness.

III: Fretfulness

"And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord" (Ex. 14:10).

Fretfulness leads to self-pity. Israel could not see the Lord. This was not a cry of faith and trust, but a fretful cry. The context very clearly reveals that it was a fretful cry full of complaint, charging God of making a mistake and that death was certain for them.

IV. Self-pity

"Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (Ex. 14:11).

Fretfulness leads to self-pity. Israel could not see herself under the guidance and protection of the Lord. Unbelief is retrogressive. They looked backward instead of upward. This led them to think they were trapped, and that nothing could be done about it. Their attitude led to self-pity and they considered they were treated unjustly.

V. Intolerance

"Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?" (Ex. 14:11).

Self-pity leads to intolerance. They quarreled with Moses for bringing them out of Egypt. They preferred servitude to liberty because liberty was attended with some difficulties. It is not fair nor just to consider difficulties as reasons for complaint or returning to the life of slavery or sin. But such is the way of unbelief. They failed to consider their hard and bitter labors in bondage. If they should come to the worst, it would be better to die in liberty and honor for righteousness' sake and go to heaven, than to die in sin, bondage and defeat and go to hell. But unbelief can not see it this way. It prefers to look back to the old life, to difficulties and into the past. Faith looks forward and into the better things to come.

VI. Discouragement

"Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?" (Ex. 14:12).

Intolerance leads to discouragement. Discouragement leads back into Egypt, into the old sinful life; to the servitude of Pharaoh, or Satan. Israel condemned Moses for bringing them out of Egypt as though he had dealt unkindly and unjustly with them. They had forgotten the miracles of mercy bestowed on them and the miracles of wrath poured on Egypt. There they were in God's care, protection and leadership, and God was about to perform one of the greatest miracles of His power for His glory and their safety and amazement, but unbelief led to discouragement and a desire to go back into Egypt.

VII. Dissatisfaction

"For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness" (Ex. 14:12).

Israel became greatly dissatisfied with Moses and God. Unbelief had so blinded them that they could only visualize death and wish they were back in Egypt. They should have been happy with God in the place He led them and have looked up and seen a visible manifestation of His presence. Then with joy they should have anticipated the great deliverance He was about to give them which would put them on the other side of the sea and the Egyptians under the sea.

Truly, unbelief manifests itself in looking back, in expressing fear, in manifesting a fretful attitude, in pitying self, in courting intolerance, in giving place to discouragements which bring dissatisfaction.

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06 -- CLASSIFICATION OF FAITH

Faith and trust are the most essential elements in Christian experience, in the work of the church, in the home, in the business world, in national and in international affairs. Without faith Christian experience could not be obtained, nor retained; the church could not progress; homes would fall apart; business, banking, train schedules all would fail to function; national crises would come and international friction and distrust would prevail. Faith brings a trust, a rest and a confidence that makes possible progress and prosperity. Faith in God and in each other is a great necessity. It is well to be able to properly classify faith in relation to God, to the Bible and to Christian experience.

I. Intuitional Faith

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:2, 3).

Intuitional faith is the faith of infants and children. Intuition is knowledge which comes from the mind without conscious reasoning. It is instinctive knowledge. Intuitional faith is natural, and innate, and requires no effort or exercise of the will to believe. Every person is born with intuitional faith. There are no natural born infidels or atheists. Infidels and atheists are made, not born. All children in their early years believe what they are taught whether it be Christianity, Catholicism, Judaism, communism, etc. Childhood is the proper time to instill the Christian faith and the Bible truths into children,

II. Historical Faith

"And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth" (Mark 10:20).

Historical faith is what might be termed a head or intellectual faith. It is based on the sayings of men. It also is a reasoning faith which takes things for granted. This faith is to be distinguished from a heart or evangelical faith. An historical faith in God and the Bible does not save us. Children soon will reason for themselves. At first they are inclined to believe all they are told. When they pass the kindergarten age and become able to read, memorize and reason, they will figure some things out for themselves. Historical faith is essential in the natural, physical and intellectual realms. The right use of this faith should lead to evangelical or heart faith.

III. Evangelical Faith

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

Evangelical faith is a heart faith -- saving faith-justifying faith. It is the faith which leads to salvation. It is a faith in God, in Christ and the Bible, which moves God to pardon the sinner and brings the desired blessing of eternal life. Every person must exercise this faith for the salvation of his own soul. It is called saving faith for it is a faith in the Savior, Who alone can save. It is a heart faith for it comes from the heart and completely changes the heart which will express itself in holy desires and conduct. It will manifest itself by doing that which the Christ, Who is believed in, bids.

IV. Doctrinal Faith

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1).

Doctrinal faith includes the essential doctrines of truth: the Gospel, the teaching of the Scriptures regarding Christ, His virgin birth, His vicarious death, His miraculous resurrection,

etc., and the doctrines which save from sin. It is the truth concerning Christ, the Bible and salvation; teaching, of the creed or articles of faith which are true and never change. Several more references which teach doctrinal faith are Acts 6:7; 14:27 and Jude 3. Sound doctrinal faith, if declared, leads to evangelical or saving faith. That is, if the gospel truth is believed it leads to salvation.

V. Gift of Faith

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit" (I Cor. 12:7-9).

"The gift of faith must be distinguished from evangelical faith and doctrinal faith. The gift of faith is a gift -- is God given, is a divine enablement, a divine implement and a divine employment. It is given by the Holy Spirit, not unto sinners, but unto believers. This gift is not given to all, but like all other gifts, it is given only unto some. Evangelical faith is exercised for personal salvation, and the gift of faith is exercised for others. This gift is to be employed for the benefit of others.

VI. Active Faith

"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:33, 34).

Active faith is a general faith in God, is a working faith. It is a faith to be exercised for our needs, victories, successes; to obtain blessings, deliverances from trials and answers to prayer. Hebrews eleven, the great faith chapter, gives many definite examples of active faith. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice to God than Cain. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down. Then in a concise record the writer says, "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Japhthae; of David also, of Samuel and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:32-34). Active faith set things in motion and mighty acts came to pass through their faith.

VII. Passive Faith

"And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented:

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Hob. 11:35-38).

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:6, 7).

There is such an element in Christian experience as passive faith. Here is where many need help and instruction. Many are tempted because they do not see things come to pass, because some prayers are not answered and because they have to endure many sorrows and trials, much poverty and many afflictions. Satan suggests unto them that they do not possess any faith because they do not see things come to pass. Some people chide themselves because they do not possess any active faith, therefore, think they do not possess any faith at all. Some good people who possess active faith do not understand or appreciate some dear' saint of God who possesses the passive faith. Passive faith is not a faith that acts, but that is acted on. It is the faith which endures, that suffers, that loves and trusts God even though it does not receive what is asked. Job possessed a passive faith. He said, "Though He May me, yet will I trust Him." The careful Bible reader will observe in Hebrews eleven the accounts of active faith are first enumerated. Then a change is observed in verses 35b to 38. They start out, "and others were tortured," etc. Why were they tortured, scourged, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword? These possessed passive faith. Let it be observed that they possessed a higher type of faith than those who possessed active faith. It honored and pleased God more than active faith. It is mentioned last because it is superior to active faith. Peter: wrote of this faith which endures and suffers and is tried in the fire, that it is more precious than gold. This faith will be revealed and rewarded when the Lord comes. Let us not judge people and say they do not have any faith when they are called upon to suffer loss, to endure afflictions, or are denied. The Lord knows, the measure of faith they possess. Passive faith is tried by the Lord, is precious in His sight and will be rewarded.

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07 -- MANIFESTATIONS OF FAITH

Since spirit, soul and body constitute man, and many members constitute the body, Christianity should manifest itself in every manner possible. We are commanded to love the Lord our God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind. The Bible teaches there is an inward man in each person. This inward man has a heart, eyes, ears, hands and feet. Faith should manifest itself in every respect in the spiritual life and also in the physical life.

I. Eyes of Faith

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death" (Heb. 11:5).

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

Faith sees, is keen and far-sighted and always takes an optimistic view of things. Faith brings things to light and makes them clear. Faith has a clear eye and sees afar off. Faith enabled Enoch to see life without death. By faith God took him to heaven in his soul and body. By faith Noah saw a coming deluge, prepared himself for it and so saved his entire household. Abraham saw the promises afar off; he saw the day of Christ, and he saw the eternal city. Moses saw the invisible. Some saw a better resurrection. Others saw better things provided for them. Faith has eyes which see the things God commands and what He promises to the believers.

II. Ears of Faith

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:5).

The ears are the gateway to the heart. Each person has inner ears. These ears hear the voice of conscience, of God, of the Spirit and of the Word of God. God speaks in a still small voice. This voice is not audible, nevertheless, it is recognized by man as from God, even as if it had been uttered in an audible voice. God has a way of speaking to men and making them know He has spoken to them. Salvation depends largely on hearing, that is, hearing the word of faith.

III. Tongues of Faith

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 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 saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith" (Mark 11:22, 23).

The tongue is an index to the heart. Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Faith manifests itself through the tongue by what we say probably as much or more than by what we do, even by words as much as by works. We believe what we say and say what we believe. Christ said, "whosoever shall say," and "those things which he saith" as though our faith is contingent on what He said and on what we say. It is well to say, "Lord, I believe Thee," "Lord, I believe Thy Word," "Lord, I believe Thou wilt answer my prayer," "Lord, I trust Thee," or "Lord, Thou art able and willing." This is exercising our faith, and talking faith inspires and increases it. The voice of faith can say as did Peter, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk," and of Paul, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her."

IV. Hearts of Faith

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).

The heart stands for the inward man, the spirit, the will, the motives, the emotions and desires. To believe with the heart involves all of these and represents much more than the mind

and knowledge. The heart of man is that faculty which has the capability for believing and receiving God. The heart faith is evangelical or saving faith. For faith to be real and accepted in the sight of God, it must have become fixed and final in the heart that it will live, act, speak and work in accordance with the will of God in Whom faith is placed and Who verifies His promises.

V. Hands of Faith

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13).

Faith takes hold of God and His promises. That which takes hold of anything is represented as arms and hands. The hand is that organ which takes hold of things. Faith has hands and has the capacity to get a grip on the Word of God. The eyes of faith see what God has promised and prepared for His believing children, and the hands of faith take hold of the same. The patriarchs saw the promises "afar off" and they seemed so real and precious to them that they laid hold of them and "embraced them" as though, they had not been "far off," but near, within their reach, and with arms of faith they took hold of them, taking them into their bosoms and cherished them as real and present.

VI. Knees of Faith

"And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees" (Gen. 50:23).

God made man so that he could love Him and also worship Him. Man was fearfully and wonderfully made. The knees with kneecaps over them for protection were made for men so they could bow and get low before God to worship and pray. There are several examples in the Bible of men who made good use of their knees, such as David, Elijah, Daniel, and James, who was nicknamed "camel knees" by the people of his generation. Joseph was an exception in possessing knees of faith. He got down on his knees for his success and life's work. Then he was much on his knees before God for his children. In addition to this, he employed his knees as the place to instruct and correct his children, then he used his knees to bring up his grandchildren and even his great grandchildren. His knees became the place where they knelt and prayed to the God of Abraham. The knees of Joseph -- What a place! What holy environments! What holy correction! What holy influence! His descendants reaped a goodly heritage around his knees. Parents should possess knees of faith and bring their children up upon their knees.

VII. Feet of Faith

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24).

Faith manifests itself in the feet. Feet of faith express themselves in a holy walk, in walking in the gospel light and truth, in walking with God and in going where He sends. The person who has feet of faith can truthfully sing, "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord; over mountain or plain or sea." The Bible designates all who go forth to publish the gospel

tidings as possessing "beautiful feet." Feet of faith walk with God and like Enoch will some day walk into heaven.

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08 -- HINDRANCES TO FAITH

If any person is short or weak in faith, or can not believe God there is some cause for it. He should begin a search to find out why faith does not operate. If a discovery is made of a leakage or hindrance, the leakage should be stopped and the hindrance removed. Seven suggestions are made in this lesson of things which hinder faith. If any of these hindrances are in the way they may be removed by doing the right thing.

I. Disobedience Hinders Faith

"But now thy 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" (I Sam. 13:14).

As faith and obedience operate together, so unbelief springs out of disobedience, or disobedience will spring out of unbelief. When the heart is not willing to obey God and submit to Him, that hinders faith and makes it impossible to function. The fact that unbelief and disobedience go hand in hand is exemplified in the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve; in Pharaoh's unbelief and stupidity, and in the sin of Moses at the waters of Marah where he became guilty of unbelief and disobedience (Num. 20:8-12). Saul lost the kingdom through failing to keep the commandment of the Lord. The more Saul disobeyed God the more he lost his faith in God. So it is with all who knowingly disobey God. It hinders faith.

II. Impatience Hinders Faith

"And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering... Behold, Samuel came... and Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said... I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God" (I Sam. 13:9-13).

Impatience hinders faith. It hinders God. It does not want to wait upon God. We inherit the promises of God through faith, obedience and patience. God works in the fullness of time, and when He works, He sits, and takes His time. Sarah tried to hurry God and resorted to means which gendered to bondage. The result was Ishmael. For thirteen years Abraham had no revelation, visitation or communication from God. During those thirteen years he took care of Ishmael. Saul became impatient and forced himself to sacrifice which displeased God so much that He rent the kingdom from him.

III. Anxiety Hinders Faith

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

Anxiety is a painful uneasiness of the mind over an impending, or anticipated ill, or evil; or being worried about the unknown and many things which never do come to pass. It causes a restless, spirit and a fretful attitude. Anxiety is not compatible with faith. It can not combine with faith. These two are not capable of existing in harmony. The one which is allowed to dominate will destroy the other. If worry is allowed to be in the ascendancy, it will hinder faith. Some one has suggested that, "Faith will kill worry, or worry will kill faith." God does not want any of His children to be anxious about anything.

IV. Unthankfulness Hinders Faith

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21).

Ingratitude is a sin. God has freely bestowed many blessings on every person. Man can never repay God for His gifts and favors. About all man can do in return for the goodness of God is to receive His blessings and thank Him for them. Unthankfulness comes from a selfish and evil heart. Unthankfulness is one of the signs that will prevail in the last days of this age. It brings perils such as do all other evil signs. Unthankfulness is like a dead object which clogs and contaminates a stream. It greatly hinders faith, for it is unscriptural, unwholesome and as death in the pot. It causes the soul to atrophy, while thankfulness enlarges the soul, courts God's favors and stimulates faith.

V. Doubts Hinder Faith

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7).

Doubts need to be distinguished from unbelief. If doubts are not conquered they will lead to unbelief. Every person is assailed by doubts. Satan fires doubts at every believer. Every believer on the right path is assaulted by doubts and a battle is on, causing him to wonder whether he is on the right path. By doubting God the path becomes obscure and the vision hazy. When faith overcomes doubts, the way will clear up and the believer will become confirmed more that he is on the right way. When doubts which come (and they will come for Satan sends them) are not overcome and mastered they will lead to unbelief and darkness, which is sin.

VI. Lack of Prayer Hinders Faith

"Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21).

Prayer holds an important place in the life of every Christian. Faith in God increases as the prayer life increases. Prayer is an act of faith and it grows the fastest when the believer

communes much with God. The person who is weak in faith needs to pray more. The lack of prayer leads to a lack in faith. Faith may be increased by praying to the Lord to increase it. The lack of prayer has been the means of spiritual poverty and spiritual losses, especially faith, in many lives.

VII, Lack of Bible Reading Hinders Faith

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

There is a place where faith may be obtained. Groceries may be obtained at a grocery store. Dry goods are obtained at a dry goods store. Nails and tools are to be obtained at a hardware store. The place where faith is obtained is the Bible, the Word of God. The Bible is the store house of faith for men. If we lack faith we should read our Bible more. Faith comes by what we read and hear. "The Bible is absolutely true. When we read the Bible, or hear it expounded truthfully, that is God's truth and is infinitely more true than anything man may say. The infinite God makes good every promise in the Bible. There can be no surer basis or foundation for our faith than God's Word. Therefore, we should read the Bible, believe and obey it, then our faith will increase. The lack of Bible reading is one great reason for the lack of faith.

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09 -- FAITH PRECEDES FEELINGS

God is, was, and is to come. He fills all time and space. Time is purely relative to Him. The future is as the present to Him. Faith brings us into the realm in which God lives and operates. When we believe the God Who dwells in the present, the past and the future, He will bring the future and what is not, into the present and the actual. When we believe God, He accepts our faith, and to Him as well as to us it! becomes an accomplished fact. The Lord dealt with Abraham, first saying, "I will" (future tense), then saying, "I am" (present tense), then saying "I have" (past tense). To Him it was an accomplished act. Abraham believed God, but had to wait years for its fulfillment. However; he accepted God's promises as already possessing the promised gift.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Hope has to do with the future, the unseen and the unpossessed blessing, Faith brings the evidence into the present and is accepting things from God as actual, settled and final. This gives us the evidence which is the witness that we will have what we have asked for. The evidence of our faith is God's Word. God can not lie. He will keep His Word at all costs. His Word is more true than our sight or feelings.

I. God's Order Versus Man's Order

God's order is that we believe His promises before we receive what He has promised, also that we exercise faith before we will feel and see the fulfillment. In getting converted, the seeker must believe that the Lord is saving him, then that the Lord has forgiven his sins, and that the Lord actually has saved him. That will bring instant blessing, for as soon as he believes the

Lord has saved him, that very instant the Lord saves Him. There is no time element which can enter into the interim. All the time required is just long enough for faith to touch Him and for the answer to come back, and this is so instantaneous the believer can not measure or distinguish the time. Christ is the Author, the Performer and the Finisher of our faith. He means what He says and will keep His word at all costs. He delights to keep and to fulfill His promises. He also delights for us to believe Him. Faith pleases and honors Him. He is more true, more unfailing than any bank. People place faith in a bank, in a check and in the banker. They go to the bank and banker and have so much faith they will actually endorse their check which means they have already received the stated amount when they have not. All the time they have to wait is to push their check through the window and long enough for the cashier to push the stated amount out. This is faith, business and honesty. Should a man present his check without endorsement, he would not receive any money. He might argue with the cashier that he will not and can not endorse it honestly until he first receives his money. He would never receive the money. If he will do it in an honest, faithlike and businesslike manner, the banker will do business with him. If we will transact business with God in faith and on His terms, He will do business with us. Every promise in the Bible is given on the basis that we first believe and obey God. Many people want to see and to feel before believing God. Not until the check-holder endorses his check, indicating he has received the money, will he receive it. Not until we believe God has heard us will He answer.

II. Faith Must be Exercised Before Feeling is Experienced

We are as nothing before God and He is everything. We can not do anything to save ourselves, God must do it all. His Word is more true than our feelings. His Word is forever settled, but our feelings are always changing. Feelings can never become a substitute for faith. God would not dare to give us anything according to our feeling, nor has He given one promise making feelings its basis of fulfillment. Many seekers at an altar are slow in getting through as we express it, that is, in obtaining salvation. They want to be saved. When asked, Have you confessed your sins? they answer, Yes. Have you repented? Yes. Are you saved? they answer No. When asked, Have you believed, they reply, I try to believe. When asked, if you could feel you were saved would you believe it, they quickly reply, "Yes, yes, I would." This is absurd. We can not feel a thing we do not have, and we will not get it until we first believe it. However, we can believe a thing we do not have. God will not allow us to be disappointed, for He will see to it that we receive it. The instant we believe, it will be so. If time is required for the answer to come, we already have received the evidence, the assurance, and we can rejoice and rest even as though we already had the answer. When we exercise our faith in God, we will experience the feeling of rest, joy and assurance. When we want to feel before we believe we do not receive anything. All of God's promises are fulfilled on condition of faith.

III. Faith Trusts in God, Feelings Trust Self

Faith anchors itself in God and feelings are rooted in self. Faith lays hold on God, then God will lay hold on us. Self can not lift itself up, but God can reach down and lift us up. Faith places its trust and dependence in God. Feeling depends on its feelings and self. Self can never rise higher than self. The promises in the Bible are upheld by God, not by man. The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." It does not say, Feel in yourself that

you are saved and you shall be saved. The Bible says, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life," and not, Whosoever feeleth in Him. Not one promise in the entire Bible is given on the condition of feeling.

IV. Faith Rests on Unchanging Facts, Feelings Fluctuate

God and His Word never change. When we stand on His Word, we are safe, and there we can abide. Faith rests on the unchanging promises of God. Feelings fluctuate, that is, they go far up and sometimes far down. When they go far up, that does not mean we are saved better, and, therefore, are more holy, nor when they go down that we have lost our salvation. Feelings do not change God, nor change our standing before God. Faith will take us through on a steady upgrade in our experience and in the sight of God.

V. Faith is Safer Than Feelings

God's Word is safer and surer than our feelings, even as God is stronger than man. Our feelings may deceive us, but God and His Word will never deceive us. Faith in God and in His Word is safer than to go by our feelings. One man in the Bible went by feeling and was deceived. That man was Isaac. Many people since then have gone by their feelings, and they too, were deceived. Abraham went by faith not knowing whither he went. He was not disappointed for God led him into another land. Peter witnessed the transfiguration of Christ on the mountain. There he saw the glory of Christ; he heard the voice of Christ and he felt the joy of His presence. This incident was prophetic and a sample of something greater to follow. Later he wrote concerning this: "We have a more sure word of prophecy." That meant that the Word of God given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is more true and certain than that which he saw, heard, and felt on the mount of transfiguration. God's Word is absolutely certain, our feelings fluctuate and are not safe. Conditions as environments, tests, influences, the weather and pain, or health, may greatly change our feelings and send them up or down. None of these things change the Word of God which is the foundation of our faith. Going according to God's Word and living by faith is safer than living according to our feelings.

VI. Faith Before Feelings Exemplified in the Scriptures

There are many beautiful illustrations in the Bible which exemplify the truth that faith precedes feelings. The priests had to step into Jordan and get their feet wet before the river parted. The Israelites had to shout before the walls fell down. Naaman had to dip seven times before he was cleansed. The blind man had to wash before he received his sight. The ten lepers had to start to the priest to report their cleansing before they were cleansed. All of these were acts of faith. They had to believe before they experienced any joyous or blessed feelings. If any had joyous feelings, it was in accordance to his faith and in the anticipation of receiving the promised blessing.

VII. Faith in God Brings a Restful and Joyful Feeling

If a deposit had been made in some bank for us by a friend and we were informed of the fact, it would not thrill or excite us with joy, neither would we take any action in regard to it if

we did not believe it. If we believed it, our faith in it would give us the joy even as if we already had it.

It is when people believe God and accept from Him what they need that they enter into a restful and joyful state. The person who believes God at all times and under all circumstances, forgetting about feelings, not seeking them, is the one that has the best, the most restful and joyful feeling. Faith will calm and steady the soul, and nothing will do as much to lift feelings from a sad, despondent and dark state to a peaceful, delightful and bright state as faith in God. Check yourself and observe the truth of this fact. When a person doubts, darkness and sadness come in like a flood. The person who goes entirely by feelings has the least joyful feelings, but always plenty of dark, sad and troubled feelings. Faith will restore confidence, rest and joy to the soul. It dispels the darkness and disburses the clouds.

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10 -- HOW FAITH MAY BE INCREASED

There should be a growth in every Christian's faith. Nature" and grace teach that growth and maturity are essential attainments. In the natural life there is growth from infancy and weakness to strength and maturity. In the Christian life there is a growth from spiritual infancy to spiritual manhood and maturity. There is a growth in faith. Faith should increase and become stronger with time. There are essential antecedents to the exercise and increase of faith. These should be sought for, and when discovered, do those things which lead to faith and its increase. There also must be an intense desire for faith. When the soul becomes concerned, distressed and burdened by the Spirit, He will beget faith within us, so that the heart will be made to cry out, "Lord, I believe."

I. By Fixing Our Eyes Upon the Promises of God

"Looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God" R. V. (Rom. 4:20).

It was by looking unto the promise of God, and by looking away from the impotence of his own body and the impotence of Sarah's womb, that Abraham's faith became so strong that he did not quail nor stagger. He paid no attention to the physical obstacles in himself and his inability, but looked unto the Lord. He even gave glory to God in that He was able to make good His own promises. This is one secret for the increase of faith -- looking away from self, from obstacles, and hindering causes, and get our eyes fixed on the promises of God.

II. By Praying for More Faith

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

It is scriptural for our faith to be increased, and it is scriptural to pray that our faith may be increased. It is an act of faith to pray that our faith may be increased, and a most certain way

of our faith being increased. The father of the demon possessed boy made his appeal to Christ to help deliver him from unbelief and to increase his faith. He had little faith in his own faith, but he had some faith in the greatness of the power of Christ. Faith is increased by praying for more faith.

III. By Exercising the Faith We Already Possess

"Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have" (Luke 8:18),

This Scripture was given in connection with the parable of the sower. It has to do with hearing. In the interpretation of the four kinds of soil, Christ said, "they that hear," "when they hear," "having heard" and "having heard." Hearing leads to faith. The good seed is received by faith. When people do not exercise their faith which involves the will and a struggle, they will lose the faith they possess. In Matthew 26:29, Christ said, "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." The men who received talents invested them in a manner so that they increased. They received what was given to them and the increase. The man who had only one talent given, buried it and did not try to increase it. It was taken away from him. By neglecting to use a muscle, it decreases -- so with faith. By using a muscle it increases -- so with faith. The employment of faith leads to more faith. This is a simple, yet positive, rule which if practiced, will lead to our faith being increased. A great truth here applies to the intellectual, the physical and the spiritual principles that a thing becomes stronger by exercise, and by disuse becomes weaker. It is a divine ordination that everything shall bring forth after its kind and if it fails to do so, there will be a judicial retribution in that it will atrophy or die. Faith is an element, which like other things may develop and increase. It will increase by wisely exercising the faith we already possess.

IV. By Looking Unto Jesus

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1, 2).

Jesus is the Author (Prince-leader and Originator), Promoter and Finisher (Perfecter) of our faith. Therefore, we should look to Him as the Example and Procuror of our faith. There may be faith in a look. The "look" of the Old Testament corresponds to the "faith" in the New Testament. A maid looks to her mistress for instruction, approval and admonition. Animals and fowls at feeding time look to their master and owner. They are dependent on their owner. From experience they know where their sustenance comes from. When they see him they expect to be fed. We know the source of our blessings. They come from the Lord, He is ever the same. He has helped us in the past, therefore, we may look to Him for the present and the future. Peter walking on the sea looked to Christ and did well. When he looked at the waves of the sea, he began to sink. We will do well and our faith will increase when we look continually to Jesus.

V. By Trusting the Lord

"The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum 1:7).

The Lord is good, is true at all times, in all places, under all circumstances, in all seasons and all through our lives. In the day of trouble, the Christian needs a strong hold. The Lord does not fail us then, but knowing that He knows, inspires and increases trust in Him. Trusting the Lord is taking a step farther than believing Him. Faith is based on God's Word, while trust is based on His faithfulness and goodness. Faith rests on what He has said, but trust is the complete abandonment of the soul in His care, His will and His judgment. It is the taking off of our hand and committing all things into His hands, leaving it all to Him to do as He pleases. Taking a surrendered attitude like this before God makes more room for God and increases our faith. When an object seems to be beyond the grasp of our faith, trust then takes the precedence and faith follows. As faith follows, it discovers the Lord is faithful, therefore, expands and becomes stronger.

VI. By Reading the Word of God

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

Faith is produced by believing what the Bible says. God has given us His Word and a revelation of Himself. Without these we would not know who and what to believe. Jesus says, "But these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). Therefore, faith comes and is increased by reading or hearing the Word of God. There is power in His Word. Our part is to read it and acquaint ourselves with that which God has uttered. Often people wait for God to put faith in them, and they do not receive anything, whereas, God waits for people to put faith in Him, then He answers immediately. God has given us His Word and if we avail ourselves of hearing, or reading it, that will increase our faith. The Holy Spirit will help us and lead us into the deeper things of God, or He will direct us to some promise which will fit our need and increase our faith.

VII. By Exercising the Will to Believe

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (I Cor. 16:13).

Faith is the act of the will. God will not believe for us. This is man's part. Satan has cheated many souls by getting them to wait for God to give them faith. Satan knows God will not believe for them, but he would make man believe that he can not believe. Men can believe. The ability to believe God belongs to every man. We must exercise our wills for it, fight for it, and, stand fast in it. If we do not, Satan will rob us of our faith. Many promises in the Bible are directed to the "whosoever." God has done His part. It is up to men to make the next move. It is all up to the wills of men. By the exercise of the will, faith may become firmer and stronger.

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Faith produces a most wholesome effect on the believer. It pleases God so well that He will never allow our faith to pass by unnoticed or unrewarded. It is one of the greatest human attributes and is the chief link between man and God. Faith literally means belief or trust. The word "faith" occurs but two times in the Old Testament in English, but its place is taken by other terms having the same or almost the same meaning. In the New Testament, the term is used more frequently. More lives have been changed for good, made righteous, holy, heroic and useful through faith in God than through any other element. No act of man will bring to him as great dividends as faith in God. Christ realized in a greater manner the import and the value of faith in God than we can apprehend, therefore, He said, "Have faith in God."

I. Faith Makes the Believer Farsighted

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

Faith makes the eternal things to become real and as present to the believer. It grasps them as already in its possession. A revelation from God can only be grasped through faith. God does not give a revelation of the future unto anyone who doubts His Word. James wrote: "Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord," that is, the man that wavereth by doubting. Abraham was a man of faith. Faith made him farsighted. He saw the day of Christ and rejoiced, and he saw the glories to come. To him these blessings were real and as present. That was what led him to live and act as though he already had obtained them. Moses, too, was farsighted. Faith led him to take this perspective in life. To him the coming glories and the heavenly realities were more enticing, though far in the future, than were the present pleasures, riches and honors of Egypt. His faith led him to choose the suffering and reproaches of his present time and his glory hereafter.

II. Faith Makes the Believer Courageous

"For by Thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall" (II Sam. 22:30).

Faith puts within us a spirit of "I can" and "I will" in relation to the things which are right. By faith Moses left Egypt, not caring what the king said or what he would do. By faith Joshua was made so courageous that he took up where Moses left off and actually led Israel into Canaan and through its conquest. It put so much courage and confidence in David that he was ambitious to meet Goliath. Faith has caused many to "wax valiant in fight." It put a heroic spirit within Caleb which made him courageous and made the giants of Canaan look like grasshoppers and as bread before him. It gave Jeremiah the tenderness of a lamb and the boldness of a lion. It enabled Daniel to assume responsibilities at the risk of his life, but secured him and he lived to be a very aged man. Faith has enabled many saints to heroically face dangers, but the Lord delivered them in response to their faith.

III. Faith Makes the Believer Wise-hearted

"As for these :our children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom" (Dan. 1:17).

The wrong move in time of conflict may lead to defeat and disaster. The element of strategy is essential in all wars, especially in the spiritual conflict and the good fight of faith. To be able to outwit, to deceive, or to attack the enemy at an unguarded or weak place may lead to victory. Then being fortified, and strong to withstand any attack from the enemy is victory.

Faith has led many believers throughout the Bible and since then to do the right things, take the right steps, or to say the right things. The course Joseph pursued and submitted to led to the throne. By faith Moses' parents pursued the right course which outwitted the king's plans. This was so in the life of David, Jonathan, Daniel, queen Esther and many others. Faith makes the believer wise-hearted. Because Daniel and his three companions had faith in God, He gave them favor, health, knowledge, skill, wisdom and promotion. God favored these boys because they placed their trust in Him. He did not fail them. Throughout the book of Daniel it will be observed that he possessed a divine wisdom which led him to do the right thing and to give the right instruction to others.

IV. Faith Makes the Believer Hopeful

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Gal. 5:5).

Faith and hope are very closely related. They walk side by side, operate together and dwell together. Where one works the other one also works. Faith inspires, feeds and helps hope. We are commanded to hope in God, in Christ, in God's promises and in God's mercy. Faith enables the believer to do so. The virtue of hope is obtained through grace, the Word of God, the gospel and faith. When faith increases, then hope increases. The stronger faith becomes, the stronger hope becomes. Hope always looks ahead and on the bright side of life. The objects of hope are the consummation of our salvation; the glorious appearing of Christ; the resurrection; the coming of the New Jerusalem, the new heaven and new earth, and eternal glory. In these the believers will not be disappointed.

V. Faith Makes the Believer Greathearted

"The man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people" (Exodus 11:3).

Moses was a man of faith. It was by reason of his faith in God that he wrought miracles and wonders in Egypt. Others had to recognize his greatness which came through faith. There is that about faith in God which greatens the heart. Faith renounces self, makes room for God and lays hold on God. The heart has a capacity for Christ and when Christ is not received into the heart, the life, the thoughts, the desires and motives, it is then the heart atrophies, the life becomes subjective and self-centered, the thoughts become vile and vain, the desires become base, and the motives become selfish. Such a life causes the soul to dry up. All who possessed great faith in God obtained a largeness of heart. The life of faith gave Abraham a vision of a better world; Joseph, a tender heart and a forgiving spirit; Moses, a desire for the eternal realities; David, a courageous spirit; Daniel, a courteous and wise heart, and Paul, a firm and uncompromising spirit. Many people would have had but very little recognition in the Bible if

they had lived without faith. They had great faith in God, therefore, God gave them recognition and promotion. God will give us due recognition if we will believe Him.

VI. Faith Makes the Believer Contented

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11).

Contentment is one of the greatest lessons a person can learn. A human teacher can not teach other men this lesson. The lesson of contentment can only be learned through faith. Faith is the teacher of contentment. Paul did not learn this lesson at the feet of Gamaliel, nor at the university at Tarsus. He learned! this lesson in the school of faith. Paul had such great faith in God, and learned the lesson of contentment so well, he graduated in this art and received an M.A. from the Lord. Without faith this art can not be learned or mastered. So well had Paul mastered the art of contentment that in whatever state he was, there was no complaining or fretting. To him sorrow, pain, persecution, opposition, poverty, necessities and reproaches were no grounds for discouragement or complaint.

VII. Faith Makes the Believer Peaceful

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15:13).

Not many of the ninety-six distinct elements are known to exist singly. Practically everything is a combination of two or more known elements. This is true of the Christian virtues and graces. That is, a Christian can not possess only one virtue and not possess the rest of the virtues. The fruit of the Spirit is a combination of nine graces. Faith, hope and love constitute the trinity of good. Although love is the greatest of these three, the fact remains that where either one of the three exist, the other two elements exist also. There can be no love without faith and hope, or faith without love and hope, neither any hope without faith and love. Whoever places faith in God, the Lord will fill that heart with joy and peace. Faith is the harbinger of peace. Where there is faith in the heart there will also be peace in the heart. Where there is peace in the heart, it is there because of faith. David had many enemies and trials, but because he had great faith in God he enjoyed great peace. Peter enjoyed great peace in prison and went to sleep because his trust was in the Lord.

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12 -- OBJECTS OF OUR FAITH

Faith must have a basis on which it may rely. The ground for our faith is the Bible, the Word of God. Back of the Bible is God Himself. Our faith has a sure foundation on which to stand. God will make good all He has promised. The objects of our faith are as follows:

I. Faith in God

"Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22).

God is true and faithful. He can not lie and He can not die. He is as good as His Word and His Word is as true as He is true. He will keep His Word at any cost. He is to be trusted because of Who He is, what He is, and what He has done. God is eternal, immutable, self-existent, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, loving, holy, faithful and true. Such a great Person is to be trusted.

II. Faith in Christ

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent" (John 6:29).

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

Christ is God and possesses all the attributes of Deity. He also is the sinless Man the Savior and Substitute for all men. Faith is to be placed in Him even as in the Father. Christ loved us enough to die for us. Since He died for us, surely we dare to believe Him. We dare to trust the Man Who died for us. We may safely stake the eternal destiny of our souls in His hands and keeping. Never has He forsaken a righteous soul.

III. Faith in the Scriptures

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (Acts 24:14).

The Scriptures are a great gift from God. The Bible is the revelation of His will to us. We are commanded to read, cherish and believe the Scriptures. Believing the Scriptures brings great rewards. The Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God and the Holy Spirit. They are the words of truth; they reveal the will of God; they are complete and sufficient; they are illuminating; they produce faith, hope and obedience; and they are to be employed against our spiritual enemies. This and much more are they to us. As such the Scriptures are to be believed and faith placed in them.

IV. Faith in the Promises of God

"And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:21).

God has given His promises to us for our good. His promises are a challenge to us. They are "yea" and "amen" in Christ. God is faithful to His promises. Not one has ever failed. God has given us His promises for the specific purpose of believing them. The only way we can receive the promised blessing is through faith.

V. Faith in the Gospel of Christ

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

Paul gave a remarkable testimony when he wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power Of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The gospel has an infinitely greater transforming power than electricity, steam, law, prison bars or police force. The gospel of Christ saves from sin, transforms the life and puts a holy nature within which will make it a delight to do right. Faith is to be placed in the gospel of Christ.

VI. Faith in Each Other

"Feed My lambs... Feed My sheep... Feed My sheep" (John 21:15-17).

"But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus" (Acts 9:27).

Christ restored Peter's faith by putting faith in him and responsibility on him. This greatly helped Peter. It helped to remove the stigma which rested on him and helped to heal the wound incurred in his fall. Then it prevented the other disciples from disowning Peter. Peter heroically took his rightful place, and came to the top and the front. Placing faith and confidence in people helps them much. It puts courage and a dignity in them Which they do not want to betray. Paul owed much to Barnabas. When all were afraid of him and would not trust him, Barnabas placed faith in him and went security for him. Truly Barnabas was a son of consolation as his name indicates. More men like him are needed.

VII. Faith in Oneself

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

This is not a faith in our own faith, but a confidence in self and a will to believe that God can and will honor our faith and answer our prayers. Unbelief is the opposite of faith. Faith brings rest and hope. Unbelief brings trouble and fear. Fear is weakening. The fear of an "I can't" hinders the faith of "I can believe God," and "God can." The fear of "I can't believe, "I can't hold out," "God can't keep me" and "I can't make good," destroys self-confidence and hinders our faith in God. Such unbelief and fear has kept many people from attaining success. It prevents people from doing what they could. To believe God requires courage and a determined will, for Satan puts up a tremendous battle to hinder the will to believe God.

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13 -- SATAN FIGHTS FAITH

Christ is the Author, Performer and Finisher of our faith. Satan is the author of unbelief. Even as Satan hated, attacked and tried to destroy Christ, so he hates, attacks and tries to destroy

faith. As Christ overcame and defeated Satan, so faith will defeat and overcome Satan. The most powerful weapon Satan employs in attacking men is unbelief, and the most powerful weapon man can employ in attacking Satan is faith in God's Word, which is the sword of the Spirit. Faith will overcome unbelief if the believer will exercise his will to believe God's Word. God and the Bible are on the side of the believer, while Satan is on the side of the unbeliever, unbelief, error and unrighteousness.

I. Satan is Displeased with Faith

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7).

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect. Satan goes to and fro throughout the whole earth to accuse, to wreck and to defeat those who have great faith in God. Faith pleases God and displeases Satan. Satan claims all sinners, for he is the father of all sinners. All sinners are unbelievers. Since Satan is the author of unbelief in God, he claims those who obey him. When a sinner repents of sin and believes in Christ, Christ will convert him and make him a son of God. It is then that he is redeemed and Satan has lost one of his subjects. Satan is greatly displeased at the element through which he loses a soul that he once claimed.

II. Satan Hates Faith

"Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?" (Job 1:9).

Satan did not believe that Job's faith was genuine, or that he believed in God. He accused Job before God, and God before Job. Since God was greatly pleased with Job because he trusted in Him, Satan lied to God about Job, and to Job about God. Satan hates faith, even as God hates unbelief. A hatred is a strong aversion coupled with ill will, and the voluntary choice that seeks the harm of the one hated. Not only does Satan hate faith, but he also bitterly hates those who possess faith. Satan hated Job for he was a man of faith in God. David, Daniel and Paul were men of great faith in God. Satan in his malevolence tried very hard to destroy these men'. He made many attacks at their lives, but through faith they triumphed.

III. Satan Strikes Severely at Believers

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph. 6:16).

Since faith is the element through which we obtain salvation, and by faith we retain it, Satan strikes severely at that element. He assails the believers by shooting fiery doubts at them. Satan would rob all believers of their faith by shifting the conflict out of the realm of faith into the realm of feeling, then into the realm of doubts, and then into the realm of unbelief, and finally into the realm of rebellion. He lies to all believers and attempts to prove to them that feeling is the foundation on which to stand, then by lying to the believers he would get them to

doubt God and believe his lies, thereby deceiving them and so take them captive. It is by the employment of the shield of faith whereby the believers quench the fiery darts of unbelief.

IV. Satan is Defeated Through Faith

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; Whom resist stedfast in the faith" (I Pet. 5:8, 9a).

Faith enables the Christian to be steadfast and at the same time it resists the Devil. Faith is twofold in its benefits. Satan operates through the unbelief of unbelievers. God operates through the faith of His believers. Since God does not coerce the will of any person, neither does Satan have the right to coerce the will of any person, it is up to man to do the believing. God does not do our believing for us. On the other hand, Satan can not force any person to doubt God. Man does the doubting in obedience to Satan. God inspires faith and Satan inspires unbelief. Man wills to believe God, and he wills to accept unbelief at the suggestion of Satan. When a person wills to believe, God will be for him and Satan will be defeated. When God is for us, Satan will be against us, but since God is stronger than Satan, he will be defeated. Faith in God defeats Satan every time.

V. Satan Loses His Subjects When They Believe in Christ

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

Faith or unbelief are the determining factors in each life as to who, that is, God or Satan will claim the believer, or unbeliever. He that believes God will also obey God, and he that is an unbeliever will obey Satan, Paul wrote, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). He that believes and obeys God becomes the servant of the Lord. This is by choice and makes God the Master and the believer the servant. Satan has no power over the will. Through faith the believer becomes the servant of the Lord, and Satan loses his subject and is defeated.

VI. Satan Would Rob Us of Faith

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31).

Satan sifts the people of God. He sifts to get rid of the wheat (faith), for he wants nothing but chaff (unbelief). He did get Judas, then tried to get Peter and the entire twelve. Satan will not allow faith to go unchallenged. When he has lost a subject, he will go to work immediately to retrieve that soul. He can only do so by getting the believer to put in reverse the actions taken and destroying the elements which were employed in conversion, such as faith in the Scriptures, in Christ, in the efficacy of the shed blood of Christ and the joy obtained. Satan will bring discouragements, darkness and doubts, then suggest to the Christian that he does not feel like a Christian and was mistaken in regard to his conversion because the joy is all gone, the glory does

not linger, or that he can never hold out, or keep his salvation. Then Satan will pervert the Scriptures by making the wrong application to them, misquote, add to, or subtract from them. One example of this is revealed by carefully comparing Psalm 91:11, 12 with Matthew 4:6.

VII. Satan Diverts from Faith to Feelings

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil" (Eph. 6:11).

One of the devices the Devil delights to employ is diversion. He diverts from faith to feelings. John writes: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4). It is ever the object of Satan to divert believers from believing and to depend on their own feelings. As long as the Christian believes in and rests on the Scriptures, he will be safe, for Satan can not blast the foundation of God which standeth safe and sure. When a Christian depends on his feelings he will stand on his own basis and merits. Satan will be certain to defeat and rob him of his faith and joy. The Christian's safeguard will be the putting on of the whole armor of God, by standing firmly and not giving any place to the Devil, and by the employment of the believer's weapons.

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14 -- CHRIST COMPLIMENTING FAITH

A compliment is a ceremonious expression of approbation or admiration. Faith greatly pleases God and without it, it is impossible to please Him (Heb. 11:1). Faith also pleases Christ. He said, "Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1). Christ complimented faith more than anything else while He was on earth. A compliment from the Lord is worth much. His words of approval mean much to us. There are seven different people in the Gospels whose faith Christ complimented. Two of the seven He complimented in a special manner by saying "Great is your faith." These two were Gentiles and not Jews. One was a man and the other one a woman. Faith is never overlooked by the Lord, but will always be rewarded.

I. The Faith of the Centurion

"I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel" (Matt. 8:10).

The centurion was a Gentile and may have felt restricted in his rights in coming to Christ. His home was in Capernaum. He had a dear servant who was grievously tormented by palsy. Faith always has some obstacles in the way which must be overcome. Satan never lets faith go unchallenged. This man came to Christ. He possessed great faith and manifested it by what he said to Christ. He believed in the Person of Christ and in the power and authority of His Word. He believed that if Christ would speak the word his servant would be healed. This is exactly what God desires of us, that is, believe His Word. Christ marvelled at the great faith of the centurion and greatly complimented his faith.

II. The Faith of the Four Friends of the Palsied Man

"And Jesus seeing their faith said to the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Matt. 9:2, 6).

Christ saw the faith of the four friends of the palsied man. He never overlooks faith. The obstacle in the way was the crowd of people, which would not get out of their way. They made no room for them to come to Christ. Then they took him up a stairway and tore the roof open to let him down at the feet of Jesus. If they could not come the ordinary way, they would pursue an unusual way. They had faith if they could get him to Christ, He would heal him. Christ did not disappoint them. Three of the Gospel writers call attention to the fact that "Jesus saw their faith." Christ honored their faith by forgiving the palsied man's sins, then by healing him.

III. The Faith of the Woman with the Issue of Blood

"Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matt. 9:22).

The woman with the issue of blood was a pitiable case. She had suffered for twelve years, spent all her living, and the physicians did not help her, but aggravated her case. She heard about the great Physician and her hope revived. However, her faith had to overcome which come some obstacles. Her disease was of a nature made it embarrassing to say anything about it, then her timidity stood in her way. She had faith that if she could but touch the hem of His garment, she would be made whole. She was made whole, but Christ required her to give a public testimony. She came trembling, for fear she might lose her healing. Christ comforted her and complimented her faith.

IV. The Faith of the Canaanitish Woman

"O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matt. 15:28).

This woman's faith manifested itself by pressing her claims to an apparent unobserving Christ; by humbling herself and taking the place of a dog instead of a sheep; by taking her place under the table instead of by it; by accepting the crumbs which fell from the table instead of partaking of the food which was on the table; and by accepting from the Lord what other people did not want. This so greatly pleased the Lord that He gave her what she wanted and also greatly complimented her faith. If people would but humble themselves before the Lord, He would exalt them, and if they would accept what others do not want, they would receive more than they could contain, and if they would accept the crumbs which fall from the Master's table, they would receive more than they deserve.

V. The Faith of the Blind Man

"Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (Mark 10:52).

The blind man's faith manifested itself by believing Christ could give him sight; by not heeding the suppression of the multitude; by not keeping silent; by failing to be discouraged; by boldly pressing his claim; by becoming more determined when opposition arose; and by calling on Christ as He passed by. His faith was rewarded and complimented by Christ. Christ told him it was his faith which made him whole.

VI. The Faith of the Sinner Woman

"Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:50).

The sinner woman's faith led her to do the right thing. She came to the right Person Who was Christ. She took her right place which was at his feet. She took the right attitude before the Savior which was repenting with tears and a godly sorrow. She did the right thing which was to lay her burden of sin at His feet and claim Him as her Savior. She received the right help, even the forgiveness of sins. Her faith overcame the obstacles, the conflict of Satan, the criticism and cold attitude of Simon. Christ did not fail nor disappoint her. He saved her and sent her on her way in peace.

VII. The Faith of the Samaritan Leper

"Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (Luke 17:19).

Ten lepers came to Christ for cleansing at the same time -- one, a Samaritan. He being of a despised race was now on a level with the nine Jewish lepers. There was no distinction now. Their faith brought them to Christ. The Samaritan leper believed Christ could and would cleanse him as well as the others and that Christ was no Respector of persons. Christ sent all ten to report to the priest. This was a test to their obedience and faith. As they went they were cleansed. All had faith to be cleansed, but the Samaritan had a great sense of appreciation for cleansing, therefore, he returned to Christ, the Great High Priest, to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to Him. Christ complimented his faith and sent him on his way rejoicing. He was not required to go to Jerusalem to pass through many days of ceremonial purifications and to offer many sacrifices. He was well rewarded in going, then also by returning to Christ.

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15 -- ACCORDING TO OUR FAITH

God works in and through us according to our faith. He works to the extent or end of our faith. Our faith measures the amount of blessings we receive from Him. All He does is conformable to our faith. Seven examples are selected from the Scriptures to illustrate "According to your faith be it unto you."

I. Caleb and Joshua Alone of One Generation Entered Canaan

"And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun" (Num. 26:65).

The ten spies gave an evil report of the land of Canaan to the people of Israel. This report brought discouragement and unbelief to them. The ten spies died before the Lord the following day. All the people wept and said, "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt; or would God we had died in this wilderness!" According to their unbelief it came to pass. They obtained what they asked for in unbelief. All of that generation died in the wilderness of wanderings. Caleb and Joshua, the two faithful spies possessed enough faith to enter Canaan. They were delayed, over thirty-eight years from entering into the land. While all the rest died, these two men lived on. It seems that God added to their lives the years in which they were delayed, or held up, so that they lived thirty-eight years longer, than they would have lived. According to their faith they lived and died not, then in due time entered into Canaan.

II. Solomon's Request for Wisdom was Granted

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people? Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (I Kings 3:5, 9, 12).

Solomon received from the Lord just what he asked the Lord to give him. He felt his need for wisdom and when the Lord made an offer to him, to ask what he desired most, he requested wisdom be granted to him. The Lord said to Solomon, "Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart."

III. The Widow's Vessels were "all Filled with Oil

"And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed" (II Kings 4:6).

Elisha instructed the poor widow to borrow not a few vessels, that is, borrow many. Then she was to pour the oil of her little stock and fill every vessel. She sent her two sons to the neighbors to borrow many vessels. Then she closed the door and began to pour oil which multiplied as she poured it into the borrowed vessels. When all vessels were filled, she called for more vessels. Her son answered, "There is not a vessel more." Then, and not until then, did the oil cease to flow. "The oil stayed," that is, ceased to flow or multiply. There was no need for it to multiply for all vessels were full. The benevolent object of the miracle was accomplished. If she had borrowed twice as many vessels, or even ten times as many before she began to pour she could have poured and filled every vessel. After they were filled it stopped increasing. She could not now go and borrow more vessels, for the oil would not start with an increasing flow. God operated to the end or extent of her faith.

IV. Joash Smote Syria Only Thrice

"And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice" (II Kings 13:18, 19).

The discharge of an arrow in the East was a symbol of an invasion into the enemy's country. Elisha's hand on the king's hand symbolized the power as coming to him from the Lord. The smiting of the arrow on the ground was symbolical of, or a token of the number of times he would gain the victory over his enemies. Joash should have become so enthused, thrilled, and inspired as to have smitten the ground ever so many times. He smote the ground only three times. This betrayed the weakness of his faith. More smittings would have meant more victories over his enemies. Elisha was stirred by a righteous indignation. This king should have smitten the ground until the dying prophet who made the king a dying offer had replied "that is enough." Joash smote Syria only thrice. His faith was weak. He failed in the test, therefore, he could not completely overcome his enemy.

V. Nehemiah's Petition was Granted to the Limit

"Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me" (Neh. 2:4, 8).

God was back of this proposition. This was the opportunity of a life time. Nehemiah had become sad because of the deplorable situation of Jerusalem and his people, the Jews in the land. If Nehemiah had requested for a day's vacation to go on a fishing trip, or for an ice cream cone, that would have been the greatest insult to the king, the greatest disappointment to God and the greatest blunder he could have made. Nehemiah requested for a leave of absence long enough to go from Shushan to Jerusalem to repair the walls of the city, and for letters of recommendation to the governors of the land to give him all the timber he needed. He obtained all he asked the king to give him. It is recorded, "So it pleased the king to send me," and "the king granted me according to the good hand of my God upon me." When the King of heaven makes an offer to us we should honor Him, ask largely and expect much, that is, put great faith in Him. Nehemiah's request honored the king for he placed great faith in him.

VI. Two Blind Men According to Their Faith Received Sight

"And when He was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord. Then touched He their eyes, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened" (Matt. 9:28-30).

Christ tested the faith of the two blind men. He left it up to their faith. He was going to work to the extent of their faith. He left it up to them to measure His operations in relation to their sight. He said, "According to your faith be it unto you." They had faith in Him as Lord and that He was able to give them sight. They immediately received their sight. Christ was pleased to give them sight in response to their faith.

VII. Simon Peter Walked on the Sea as Long as He Believed

"And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me" (Matt. 14:28-30).

The disciples were frightened when they saw Christ walking on the sea. When He assured them it was He, Peter became bold and venturesome. He desired to go to meet Him. Christ said "Come." Peter actually walked on the sea until he saw the wind boisterous, then he got his eyes on the waves and became afraid and began to sink. Christ rescued him and gently rebuked him by saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt." The "little faith" here means faith for just a little time. Peter did not believe long enough. His faith was but for a short period, then he

began to doubt and sink. He should, have kept on believing. According to his faith it was unto him. The rest of the disciples had the same privilege as Peter. At their request and Christ's command, all could have stepped out of the boat and walked on the sea to meet Him. If the boat had floated away from them, Christ could have led every one to the shore on foot on top of the sea without losing one. As long as people believe and look to Christ they will live on top of the troublesome sea of life and not sink.

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16 -- SEVEN RESULTS OF FAITH

The results of faith are many. They can not all be enumerated. Faith is progressive. It leads from one blessing to the next. Faith is a one-time and all-time condition for receiving blessings from the Lord. The beauty of faith is that it is possible unto all people. We dare to believe God. He is to be trusted. It has been said, "Faith moves the hand that moves the universe." We can not do much, but we can trust God Who can do great things. Let all who want to see results believe God. Seven results are mentioned and each result is backed up by a Scripture promise.

I. Faith Pleases God

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

Faith pleases God. God is not hard to please if we want to please Him. The best manner in which to please Him is to believe Him. The Devil hates faith. Satan fights faith more than anything else. He knows that faith is the one element which pleases God and obtains blessings from Him. Moreover, Satan also knows that faith is the element which defeats him in our lives.

II. Faith Leads to Justification of Sinners

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28).

Justification of sinners is wrought only on the condition of faith. Weeping is good in its place, but tears do not justify. Penance is good and essential, but penance does not justify the sinner. Praying is a good act, but praying, loud praying, or long praying does not justify the sinner. These may lead to faith, but the last step to be taken is faith, for a man is justified by faith. God is the One Who justifies the sinner. He does it on only one condition, that is, faith.

III. Faith Leads to Sanctification of Believers

"And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

In obtaining the experience of sanctification, even as in justification, faith gets us clear across on the experiential side, where it is a reality. No other element will get us across. When all conditions are met, faith will operate when man exercises his will and his heart to believe. Since it is the will of God even our sanctification, it should become the will of every Christian. If the Christian will believe it, he will experience the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

IV. Faith Leads to Farsightedness

"For he (Abraham) looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

Faith looks up and forward. Faith is anticipative. It deals with things unseen. It accepts the promises of God and enjoys them as real, as present and permanent. The Lord gave Abraham a revelation and a vision of the New Jerusalem, the coming city. Abraham gave due regard to it, believed there was such a state and place; he looked for it, waited for it, talked about it, enjoyed it by way of anticipation and lived with that city in view. It spoiled him for this world, for he never built a house, but lived only in tents all his life. It blessed and encouraged him in all of his trials and helped him to patiently bear all inconveniences in life. Faith was a potent factor in Abraham's life. It made him farsighted and it will help to make us farsighted.

V. Faith Leads to Victory

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God" (I John 5:5).

Faith makes the believer an overcomer. Unbelief makes the doubter a shortcomer. The believing Christian is the real conqueror of the world. The world lies in the way of every Christian's entrance into heaven. Christ overcame the world and all who believe He is the Son of God will also overcome the world. 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. Faith draws us to Christ, to holiness and heaven, therefore, it also draws us away from the world, sin and hell.

VI. Faith Leads to Calmness of Heart

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

Faith is a certain cure for heart trouble, that is, a troubled heart. Unbelief and worry are strenuous and harmful to the physical heart, while faith is soothing and comforting to the physical heart. The same is true concerning the inward man. The remedy for griefs, sorrows, discomposure, hurry, confusion, trouble, and a ruffled spirit, is prescribed by Christ, even, faith in God and faith in Christ. In the Father and the Son we find comfort, peace, rest, a home and an eternal abiding place.

VII. Faith Leads into Heaven

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

Faith leads from sin into salvation, into a justified experience, on into a sanctified experience, and ever on into a victorious life, away from the world, into a calm and peaceful life, then eventually into heaven. The Christian life is a life of faith every step of the way. Faith puts us on the way, keeps us in the way, and takes us all the way.

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17 -- FAITH OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Faith and conduct are closely related to each other. Faith inspires action. It is possible for young people to possess great faith. Children often have remarkable answers to prayer. All young children possess intuitional faith. They need to be taught the Bible, about heaven, angels, sin, God's love, about Christ and salvation. Such teaching will lead to a heart faith. This is the faith which pleases God and which God honors. Faith does not manifest itself alike in all people. Seven young people are selected from the Bible and their faith and conduct considered.

I. Faith of a Young Seer -- Joseph

"And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren" (Gen. 37:5). "And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and, thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying" (Gen. 37:10, 11).

Joseph was a lovely character. Like his mother he was beautiful. His father made him a beautiful coat of many colors. These colors were indicative of his many beautiful characteristics. He chose to be honest and to do right. The Lord was with him. That was the great secret of his life and success. The reason the Lord was with him is he loved the Lord, loved righteousness and hated iniquity. He would rather suffer wrongfully than to do wrong. God called him to be a prophet, a saint, an interpreter and a food administrator. The dreams of his childhood were

prophetic. In due time they were fulfilled. He was faithful because he was full of faith. Joseph was more like Jesus than any other character in the Bible. His life was highly typical of Christ.

II. Faith of a Young Prophet -- Samuel

"But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice" (I Sam. 2:18, 19).

Samuel was asked of the Lord, given by the Lord, then given back to the Lord. His mother possessed great faith in God and she instilled the same into her infant son. Samuel was taken to Eli and the tabernacle as soon as he was weaned. He worshipped the Lord at Shiloh and ministered unto the Lord. He listened to the voice of the Lord and responded to it. He is noted for his submission to his mother, to Eli and to the Lord. The same is true of his promptitude and his obedience. He became a great prophet and judge. Samuel also was a man of great intercession. His influence for good was great.

III. Faith of a Shepherd Lad -- David

"And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (I Sam. 16:11, 12).

David was a lad of great faith. His faith and conduct ran parallel. He was converted early in life. The Lord gave him a good heart. This was what he desired. He was a boy after God's own heart. Through faith he became heroic. By faith he killed a lion, a bear and the giant in his youth. He is noted for his good behavior. He behaved himself so well that Saul became afraid of him. His conduct and achievements developed out of his faith. He became the great king of Israel. He enjoyed many great victories in his life.

IV. Faith of a Sweet Little, Maid -- Naaman's Wife's Maid

"And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" (II Kings 5:2, 3).

The Syrians may have killed this little maid's father and brother in battle, then taken her captive. She might have been bitter and resentful. When Naaman became a leper, she might have rejoiced and wished for his speedy death. But she was not that type of girl. She possessed a very lovely character, a sweet disposition and great faith in the God of Israel, and had confidence in Elisha the prophet. She testified and gave words of faith which led Naaman to go to Israel for cleansing. Elisha heard of Naaman's coming and told him what to do. He was cleansed and then converted to become a servant and worshipper of the God of Israel. This maid's faith shines forth

like a star in a clear night in a dark period of Israel's history when many possessed but little or no faith in God.

V. Faith of a Young Fisherman -- John

"And the two disciples heard Him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi, where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt" (John 1:37-39).

John the beloved, son of Zebedee and brother of James was converted early in life under the ministry of John the Baptist. When he heard, about the Messiah as the Lamb of God, he desired very much to see Him. This was a good desire and it came to fruition. The first time he saw the Lamb of God, he and Andrew followed Him. Christ gave them the blessed privilege to go home with Him. John and Andrew were never the same after spending one evening with Christ. John became attached to Christ and also became a devout disciple. He was full of ambition and aggression and things had to move before him. Christ designated him as "a son of thunder." Being with Christ took the blustering and thundering disposition out of him, and he became so filled with the love of God that he became an apostle of love and wrote more about love than all the other New Testament writers together.

VI. Faith of a Thoughtful Lad -- An Unnamed Boy

"There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? (John 6:9).

The name of this thoughtful lad is not given. Very little is said concerning him; however, he figures very prominently in the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand which is recorded in each of the four Gospels. He was a boy with an adventurous spirit, possessing foresight, and was full of curiosity and expectancy. He had heard of Christ and when Christ came his way he prepared to follow Him all day, to hear His wonderful words and to see His wonderful works. In this he was not disappointed. He evidently remained close to Christ. When the emergency arose, he very gladly offered his lunch to Christ if it would be of any help. It did help very greatly. It was his lunch which was accepted by Christ to be blessed and multiplied. He saw it multiply in the hands of Christ. He saw all fed and satisfied. He saw twelve baskets full of fragments gathered after all were satisfied. This was a most thrilling day for this lad -- a day which he never forgot.

VII. Faith of a Young Preacher -- Timothy

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in (thee by the putting on of my hands" (II Tim. 1, 5, 6).

Timothy possessed an unfeigned faith. That is a splendid thing for any young man to possess. This faith was first in his grandmother and also in his mother. One of the finest things a young man can have is a godly mother and a saintly grandmother. Timothy had a splendid background. He was well instructed in the Old Testament Scriptures. When Paul came along, he readily accepted Christ as his Savior. On his second journey, Paul picked him up to become his assistant and to train him for the ministry. As a young minister, Timothy had much to learn, but he had a great teacher and example in the person of Paul.

Such was the faith and conduct of seven Bible characters. Many young people all along the period of time have boldly and faithfully taken their stand for the Lord. There is a place and a ministry for young people even today.

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18 -- GREAT FAITH OF WOMEN

The following seven women became great women because of their faith in God. The faith of a woman is as precious and pleasing to God as is the faith of a man. The faith of these seven women led to their own salvation, then it greatly influenced and inspired their own, or those around them. Five of the women were great because each gave birth to a son. Each influenced her son to become great and noble. These sons filled great places in life. This made the mothers great. Influencing and inspiring one's own or others to live holy and useful lives is fulfilling a great ministry and is a practical way of doing good.

I. Faith of Sarah

"Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised" (Heb. 11:11).

The New Testament honors Sarah as a woman of great faith. God had given Abraham and Sarah the promise of a son. Sarah was a little impatient and unbelieving for some years, but God waited until her impatience and unbelief turned into patience and faith. She resorted to self-planning which did not help the Lord at all. Her unbelief led to a laughter of doubt, but God in His faithfulness and patience led her to the place in which her laughter of unbelief was turned into a laughter of faith. Then she judged Him faithful Who had promised them a son. Her faith pleased God and He renewed her youth and rejuvenated her body, Which made it possible for her to give birth to a son when she was ninety years old. Sarah's faith greatly pleased and honored God. One beautiful feature of God and grace is that when any person comes to the place he believes God, He forgives all unbelief and blunders and buries them in the sea of His forgetfulness. Sarah's impatience, self-planning and unbelief are not recorded in the New Testament.

II. Faith of Jochebed

"And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein: and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink" (Ex. 2:3).

Jochebed the mother of Moses, possessed great faith. In Hebrews 11:23, we learn that the faith of both parents was expressed in hiding Moses for three months. Following that period the faith of the mother expressed itself in relation to her son. The faith of Jochebed led her to take the right action in each crisis of her life in relation to Moses. Before the birth of the child, she was comforted in the prospect of his arrival, even though Pharaoh had made a law that all the boy babies should be slain or drowned in the River at birth. Her faith led her to hide him. Then her faith led her to make an ark of bulrushes and daub it with slime and pitch. She put Moses in the ark and placed it in the river. She took her hands off and at the same time placed him in the hands of God. In prayer she could lift up holy hands covered with pitch, but they were hands of faith. God honored her faith and took care of her son. Everything worked together for good and God mightily used Moses.

III. Faith of Rahab

"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace" (Heb. 11:31).

The faith of Rahab expressed itself in what she said and in what she did. Rahab was a Canaanite, therefore, under the special curse and doom which rested on all the Canaanites. This woman entertained the two spies that were sent into the land. She also hid them and gave them good advice so they could make their escape. Her faith expressed itself in what she said: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land," and "the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." She accepted the God of Israel and pled for her life and that of her own household. She fell in line with the purposes of God. Her faith expressed itself in hanging the scarlet thread in her window and remaining in her house when Jericho was taken. By the faith of the Israelites the Walls of Jericho fell down when they shouted, but by the faith of Rahab the wall where she dwelt did not fall. Rahab, by faith, entered into the congregation of the Lord, and later became the wife of a prince of Judah who was in the Messianic line. This prince was Salmon. Boaz was the son of Rahab. He also was a mighty prince of Judah and the husband of Ruth.

IV. Faith of Deborah

"And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time" (Judges 4:4).

Deborah was a woman of extraordinary piety, wisdom, courage and faith. The Spirit of the Lord rested on her. She judged Israel in a critical time of her history, even in the time when Jabin, king of Canaan "mightily oppressed the children of Israel" for twenty years. It seems all men failed the Lord in those days and none qualified to become a leader. When men fail, God will raise up women to carry out His plans. Such a woman was Deborah. Her name means a "bee." She possessed a prophetic gift. She was industrious as a bee. Besides her duties as a wife

and homemaker, she judged all who came to her for help. Her life, like a bee, was full of activity and of sweetness. She received her sweetness, fragrance and wisdom from the Lord Whom she served. In relation to her enemies, she gave them nothing but sharpness and a sting. Through her leadership, the Canaanites were stung, routed, discomfited and destroyed.

V. Faith of Ruth

"And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:16, 17).

Ruth was a Moabitess. As such she was cursed and shut out from the congregation of the Lord. Ruth placed her trust under the wings of the God of Israel.

She was poor, bereft, and sad, but virtuous. A crisis came into her life in which she could never be the same which ever course she took. Behind her were Moab, her former lovers, her god Chemosh, an idolatrous religion, sin, death and eternal destruction. Before her were Canaan, Bethlehem, the God of Israel, the true religion, a rich saintly prince of Judah (a husband,) and a place in the ancestral line of the Messiah. She made her decision and the world has never been the same. Ruth cast her lot with the people of God. Her decision was prompt, personal, firm and final. Her knowledge of God inspired a faith in God which brought to her the promotion and blessings of a husband, a home, happiness, honor and heaven.

VI. Faith of Hannah

"For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him: Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there" (I Sam. 1:27, 28).

Hannah lived in days when the spiritual life of Israel was at a low ebb. She was the wife of Elkanah. Because she was barren and could not have posterity, her husband became a polygamist by marrying another wife. Hannah deplored the wickedness in the land, but she was a woman and could not do much to bring about a moral and spiritual reform, and her husband would not do anything concerning it. Hannah loved the Lord and desired to bless her generation. If she could not do good in one manner, her faith led her to pursue a course in which her holy desires came to fruition. Hannah prayed to God that He would give her a son. She promised the Lord that if He would give her a son, she would lend him to the Lord all the days of his life. The Lord gave her a son, and she gave him back to the Lord. This son was Samuel, the judge, prophet, revivalist and reformer.

VII. Faith of Esther

"Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day:

I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:15, 16).

God prepares the person for the place before the emergency arises if that person will qualify. Mordecai was right when he told queen Esther, in those days when everything looked dark to the Jews, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this." The only hope Mordecai saw for the deliverance of the Jews was for Esther to venture into the presence of the king to intercede for the Jews. The queen realized she was taking her life into her own hands in doing so. She called for three days of fasting and prayer by her people. Her faith was daring and venturesome. She was willing to sacrifice her life for her people. The Lord made use of her beauty, charm and patriotism. The deliverance came to the Jews through her intercession.

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19 -- THE FAITH OF JOB

Job was one of the greatest Old Testament characters. When it comes to being able to endure the greatest prosperity, to sustain the greatest loss, to suffer the greatest pain, to retain the greatest patience, to take the greatest Satanic blows, to be the most greatly misunderstood person, to go through the greatest spiritual tunnel, to be the greatest criticized person and to receive the least comfort, the least care, the least hope, the least blessing and yet maintain great faith in God, that person was Job.

I. Job's Faith in Days of Prosperity

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (Job 1:8).

Truly Job was all God claimed he was. God would not tell a lie concerning Job. He loved God more than riches, money, land, stock, children, or his own life. His religion was not sham, or in his possessions, or in his prosperity. It was real. He did not place his faith in prosperity, property or possessions. His faith was in God, therefore, it was genuine.

II. Job's Faith in Days of Adversity

"Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:20-22).

Satan declared Job would curse God under adversity. He was given permission to remove everything he possessed. When Satan struck, blow upon blow fell with rapidity. In a little while all Job possessed was swept away. Job's faith stood the test. He did not fail. Instead of cursing God, he worshipped the Lord and blessed Him altogether. His faith was as firm, as true and as

strong as ever. The loss of all his possessions with his ten children did not weaken his faith, nor dispose him in the least to curse God.

III. Sob's Faith in Affliction

"So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes" (Job 2:7, 8).

Satan was positive in his declaration to God that Job would curse God if he were afflicted. Job's faith stood the test in affliction. Afflictions in the body are a great test to the spirit. Many have fallen from grace during times of affliction. Some will not endure afflictions, but bring an untimely end to their own lives by committing suicide. Satan has tempted many people to commit suicide when they were afflicted. In the case of Job, Satan suggested that he commit spiritual suicide and his wife suggested to him to commit physical suicide. The faith Job possessed in God enabled him not to do either one, but helped him to endure and yet trust God.

IV. Sob's Faith in Opposition

"Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall I receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job 2:9, 10).

It may be wondered why Satan -- did not destroy Job's wife in his first grant to destroy all that Job possessed, but he may have spared her in order to employ her to tempt Job. Anyway, this is exactly what happened. She said, "Curse God and die," which was what Satan wanted him to do. The meaning of cursing here is, bid farewell to. Evidently what she meant was, "Job, there is no God. If there is a God, He never would have allowed all this to come to you. Since there is no God and you absolutely cannot get well, you should commit suicide, for when you are dead, you will be out of your misery." Job was as willing to trust the Lord when he received evil from the Lord as when he received good from Him. His faith did not fail when his wife turned against him.

V. Sob's Faith Under False Charges

"But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

Job feared that when people heard of his loss and affliction, they would not understand his case, but charge him with sin. So it came to pass. His three friends came to comfort him, but they brought many false charges against him and proved to be miserable comforters. They did not know of the council held in heaven, that Satan was given permission to test Job, nor did they understand his case, therefore, they could not help him. Neither could Job tell them why losses and afflictions came to him. However, he trusted God and acknowledged that God knew the way

he had to take and in due time all would work out well. His faith stood the test under false charges.

VI. Sob's Faith in the Dark

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

When everything was dark around him, and all seemed hopeless, Job did not know why he lost all of his possessions, why he was afflicted, why God was silent and why no light shone on his pathway, but even then his faith was so firm and his integrity so strong in God that he confessed he would trust in God though He slew him. Job could say, "I do not know why I am afflicted, and I know God knows I do not know, but I know He knows why, and if I should not recover, but die and worms will destroy my body, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I know that in the latter day He will stand on the earth and I know then I will be resurrected and see Him face to face, then all things will be made plain." Such a faith is certain to win and be vindicated.

VII. Job's Faith Vindicated

"And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath. And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning" (Job 42:7, 10, 12).

The Lord took Job's case in hand and vindicated his faith as tried and found true. It was while Job prayed for his three friends who had vexed him that the Lord vindicated his faith and turned his captivity, What followed was: Job's three friends were converted; Job was healed; the tornado subsided; Satan was defeated and proven to be a liar and a murderer; his relatives and friends were restored; he received double from the Lord in possessions and years; and above all God was pleased and glorified.

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20 -- THE PATIENCE OF FAITH

The saints in all ages have been tempted to think that the Lord delays to answer their prayers, or that He is not responsive to their faith. Many have cried unto the Lord as did David, praying, "How long, O Lord, how long?" The longer faith waits on God the more it will receive. We inherit the promises of God through faith, patience and obedience. We should never hurry or crowd God. A weak faith hurries God, but the faith which pleases God will wait on Him. The Lord is never late. He always keeps His Word and fulfills His promises in His own time and way.

I. Abraham Staggered Not at the Promises of God

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. 4:20).

The faith of Abraham was greatly tested for many years. When the Lord called him He also promised to make him a great nation. He was seventy-five years old when he left Haran to enter Canaan. Therefore, for at least twenty-five years he waited for the fulfillment of the promise. Sarah had been barren all her life and the longer he waited, the more humanly impossible the fulfillment of the promise became. However, Abraham was strong in faith and did not stagger at the promises of God through unbelief. Faith put a spiritual stamina in him, whereas, unbelief would have caused him to stagger at the stupendous promise God made. The longer he waited the stronger his faith became.

II. Joseph Sweetly Awaited the Fulfillment of His Dreams

"He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free" (Ps. 105:17-20).

The faith of Joseph also was severely tested. He, too, learned that the promises of God are inherited through patience. When he was seventeen years old, God gave him a revelation of the future. At that time he was a divinely inspired prophet. The fulfillment of his dreams had to wait twenty-two years. He was sold, then sold again, then imprisoned. The years seemed long and gloomy, but at the appointed time, that is, not until he was thirty years of age was he promoted and even then nine years he had to wait before his brethren came to bow before him and buy food. His faith was tested, then rewarded and honored. During these years, Joseph did not once express a resentful sentiment, an unkind word or feeling. He sweetly awaited God's time for promotion.

III. David Gracefully Awaited Ascending the Throne

"He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young He brought him to feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance" (Psalm 78:70, 71).

The Lord called David when he was a lad, evidently eighteen years of age. This was the time when he was anointed by Samuel with oil and with the Spirit of the Lord. David was accepted in the courts of king Saul, then was forced to flee to escape the onslaughts of Saul. Evidently it was a period of twelve years from the time when David was anointed the first time by Samuel and then anointed by the elders of Judah at which time he became king over Judah. During these twelve years he lived in the hills and mountains of Judah, dodging Saul. On different occasions he could very easily have killed Saul, but he refrained from touching him. He did not force himself to become king. His faith stood the testings of time and very gracefully did he await God's time to ascend the throne. God did not disappoint David.

IV. Daniel Patiently Prayed, Fasted and Waited

"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words" (Daniel 10:2, 12).

Daniel the prophet knew how to patiently wait on the Lord. On one occasion he held on in prayer for twenty-one days. Daniel was greatly beloved in heaven. God was all taken up with Daniel because Daniel was all taken up with God. Daniel was greatly taken up with heaven, therefore, heaven made much over Daniel. Daniel made prayer the first business in his life, therefore, God gave very special attention to his prayers. On one occasion while he prayed, God immediately sent Gabriel with the answer, but the Satanic forces withstood this heavenly messenger for twenty-one days. Faithful Daniel prayed on, held on, fasted on, and waited on until reinforcement came and the angelic messenger delivered the answer to Daniel. Through patience his faith obtained the answer.

V. Zachariah and Elisabeth Became Old Waiting on God

"But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (Luke 1:13).

Zachariah and Elisabeth had prayed for a son. They keenly felt the reproach which rested on them for being childless. Their prayers were recorded in heaven. God set the time for the arrival of this son. In the meantime this couple prayed, waited, trusted God, walked with God, grew old, dropped the matter, gave up and became reconciled to God in the matter. However, the eyes of the Lord were running to and fro, looking for the forerunner of the Messiah. His eyes fell on this aged godly couple and Gabriel was sent to Zachariah to inform him of the birth of John. John was not late in coming, but was born on schedule time. God honored the prayers, faith and piety of this couple. Their faith was tested severely because of waiting so long before a son was given. In God's own time their faith and prayers were rewarded.

VI. Mary and Martha Awaited the Arrival of Christ

"Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat still in the house" (John 11:20).

The Lord loved Mary, Martha and Lazarus with an infinite love and these three dearly loved the Lord. When Lazarus was sick the sisters sent a message to Christ, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Christ knew who it was. He prayed to His Father about Lazarus and the father revealed to Him that He should not go yet, but wait until Lazarus had died and been dead four days before going there, then He should raise him from the grave and perform the greatest miracle of His ministry in the eyes of men. He had told the disciples before going to Bethany, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there." Christ arrived on schedule time, four days after the death of Lazarus. He did not apologize for arriving four days after his death. The two sisters had waited, but they thought their waiting was in vain. Christ comforted

and rewarded the two sisters and Lazarus as well for this trying ordeal which they were called to pass through. Great blessing came to them as well as to many others by their faith being tested, and the answer delayed as they had thought at the first.

VII. Paul Through Persecutions, Hindrances, Perils and Bonds Arrived in Rome

"Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you" (Rom. 1:10).

"For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you" (Rom. 15:22).

Paul possessed a holy ambition to plant the gospel in many great centers, one of these being Rome. Several years before arriving there he wrote an Epistle to the Romans. In that Epistle he stated his desire to come unto them and also requested prayer that he might have a prosperous journey in coming to them. However, Paul met up with many providential hindrances which delayed the journey several years before his desire came to fruition. When he made the journey, it was a most perilous one, and when he arrived, it was as a prisoner. Paul's faith was severely tested, but through patience he realized the fulfillment of his faith and prayers. This teaches us that our lives, times and plans are in God's hands and He appoints the time for the execution of His purposes. The Lord begets holy desires in the hearts of His children, then He inspires faith to believe Him for the very things He wants to give or do through us, however, He also tests our faith by allowing us to wait, then in His own time He brings them to pass.

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21 -- THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

Faith in God and obedience to the Scriptures go hand in hand. These are inseparable. Faith operates only in the pathway of obedience. When the hand of faith grasps the hand of obedience, these two elements form a blessed unity which mightily move God. Obedience must have the assistance and ability of faith to operate, for faith can not operate without obedience. He who does not obey God can not believe God. Faith responds to obedience every time. Since faith involves the will, and faith is possible unto all, there comes a time when we must believe in order to obey.

I. Abel Came God's Way Before Being Saved

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4).

Faith must have some revelation from God on which to stand. The Lord God had revealed to man that redemption must come through sacrifice and that man must have a legal substitute whereby the innocent would die for the guilty. This revelation was given when the Lord God killed some innocent animals, skinned and made them naked and made coats for Adam and Eve out of the skins. Abel knew this fact and came God's way which was the way of

obedience and faith. He killed, skinned and offered a lamb to the Lord. His faith operated and God saved him and gave him the witness by testifying to the acceptance of his offering and of himself.

II. Noah Built an Ark on Dry Land Before the Flood

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

The fear which possessed Noah was more than a slavish fear; it was a reverential fear. This fear moved Noah to obey God in the building of an ark. He took every precaution to obey God and to make his escape a certainty. In the case of Noah and his escape, like the case of Abel, faith and obedience had to go hand in hand.

III. Abraham Went Before He Knew Where He was to Go

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8).

Here is a striking case where faith and obedience operated in unity and where one was contingent on the other. The call for Abraham to leave his country, his kindred and his father's house was very specific, but where he was to land and what country it was, was not revealed unto him until he arrived there. When he left Ur, the Lord led him in a general direction, but he did not know the destination. This required far greater faith and was a greater test of obedience than if the Lord had revealed the end from the beginning and told him of the promises made after he arrived in Canaan. Abraham obeyed and his obedience ran parallel with his faith. Both were pleasing to the Lord.

IV. Daniel Faithfully Pursued His Daily Prayer Schedule Before His Vindication

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Daniel 6:10).

Daniel pursued a regular daily schedule in his devotional life which was to pray three times every day. Daniel's enemies laid a trap for him. When he knew the decree had been signed by the king specifically to trap him, it did not disturb Daniel, nor change God. Neither did it deter Daniel, nor did it alter his course of faith and obedience (believing and praying) in the least. He pursued the course he had been following for it was his known duty before God. God placed His favor and seal on Daniel by delivering him from the lions.

V. Withered Hand Was Stretched Forth Before Restoration

"He said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Luke 6:10).

This man was called on to stretch forth his hand before it was restored. This required faith and obedience, but only enough faith to obey. This man did not say, "I can not believe that thou canst heal me," neither did he say, "I can not stretch forth my hand. You heal it first then I will." This would have been the act of unbelief and disobedience. By doing so he would have forfeited the blessing of healing. His obedience was prompt and his healing also was prompt, however, obedience preceded healing.

VI. Ten Lepers Started to the Priest Before Cleansing

"And when He saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (Luke 17:14).

In several of His outstanding miracles, Christ first tested the obedience of those seeking His help before healing them. Their obedience was a test to their faith. Christ sent the ten lepers to the priests to report to them as if they had been cleansed. If they had contended, "We will not go until we are cleansed" or have said, "Cleans us first, then we will go to the priest," they would have forfeited cleansing, for that would have been an act of disobedience and unbelief. From the very fact that Christ was the Son of God and could do it for them and it would not cost them anything, but be given them as a gift that was of inestimable value to them, was sufficient reason why they should honor, obey and believe Him and accept cleansing in the way He wanted to give it to them. Obedience and faith had to operate together before cleansing was obtained. This principle applies to all blessings to be received from Him.

VII. Blind Man Washed Before Receiving Sight

"And He said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing" (John 9:7).

Christ told the blind man to go and wash the clay from his eyes which He had placed there. This was to test his faith and obedience. Obedience was essential to his faith. The man had to obey before he received his sight. He did not argue with Christ, but obeyed promptly and cheerfully. As soon as he washed he received his sight. He went a blind man, but an obedient man. He returned a seeing and rewarded man. Christ honored his obedience and faith.

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22 -- FAITH FREES FROM FEARS

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4). Faith is the antithesis of unbelief, and courage is the antithesis of fear. Faith in God makes people free, while fears bring them into bondage. Faith is a great liberator. It puts within us courage and confidence. Courage gives strength and puts a steadiness within us. Confidence gives poise and calmness to the soul. Faith and fears are incompatible. They can not dwell in the same heart at the same time.

I. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Hell

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Regeneration is a twofold work of grace. It is objective and subjective, or negative and positive. Regeneration saves from sin and saves for salvation; it saves from going to hell, and it saves to go to heaven; it includes the forgiveness of sins, and the impartation of eternal life, It is a passing from death unto life. It also is a transition from the side of death, sin and hell, to the side of life, righteousness and heaven. The person who has been redeemed is free from sins. His sins have been judged and removed, therefore, the fear of hell has also been removed.

II. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Backsliding

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him" (Hosea 14:4).

Probably more people backslide through doubts and unbelief than any other way. Chronic backsliders generally are chronic doubters. The enemy knows how and along what line to trip these souls. There is such an experience as being healed from backsliding. This is clearly stated in Jeremiah 3:14, and in Hosea 14:4. Being healed is a complete recovery from, and the removal of the cause of backsliding. Paul testified: "I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Faith in God will bring about the recovery. Faith may become so fixed, so final and so settled that the soul will become so established as to stand firmly and all fear of backsliding will be removed.

III. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Old Age

"And even to your old age "I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Isa. 46:4).

Faith will enable aged people to gracefully, cheerfully and sweetly face old "age. The person who walks with God by faith continually may always say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." As he looks into the future, he may as truthfully say, "Henceforth I will trust Him for He has been faithful in the past." The aged saint may look back and it will look bright, then as he looks forward, it will look brighter still. Faith will deliver from the fear of old age.

IV. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Coming Calamities

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Ps. 46:1, 2).

The enemy of our souls would torment us with fear because of coming calamities. We have nothing to fear when God is present, and is our refuge and strength. A Christian woman

was in the habit of saying in the presence of her saintly colored servant who was always happy: "Dinah, suppose this should happen, or that should come to you, some great sorrow, accident or misfortune."

"Why Missus," said Dinah, "I never spouses any thing; it is your spouses that make you so miserable. I knows all things work together for good to dem what loves de Lord, and that makes me happy all de time." Dinah was full of faith and that saved her from the fear of coming calamities, which never really come.

V. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Death

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil: and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14, 15).

Christ partook of flesh and blood that He might taste death for every man. He pulled the stinger out of death. Faith in Christ will remove the fear of death. When God's time comes to call His children home, He will give them all the grace that will be needed in that hour. It is Christ Who puts the saints to sleep, and it is He Who will awaken them in the resurrection morning. Many saints have welcomed death because they knew it would bring them blessed relief from suffering, then it would allow them to go home to be with the Lord. The aged Simeon prayed, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." Paul wrote, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Some saints in time of affliction have said, "I would not turn my hand over to decide whether to go or to stay." Faith enables Christian people to attain a maturity, a heavenly fragrance, a sweetness and ripeness so as to be ready and willing to go when Christ calls them, even as fruit which holds on until ripe, then when touched, drops into the hand.

VI. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Christ's Coming

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (I Tim. 4:8).

Faith helps to prepare the believer for the coming of the Lord. Those who are ready have nothing to fear, for all will be well. Faith enables us to cherish His coming, to hope for it, and with patience to wait for His return. Those who are not ready fear His coming and shrink from it. Those who are ready can pray as did John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

VII. Faith Delivers from the Fear of Judgment

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment" (I John 4:17).

Faith enables us to enter into an experience with the Lord in which His love dwells deeply in our hearts which dispels fear of the future or of judgment. It helps us to live the ready

life. By faith, God dwells in us and we in Him. The believer's joy and hope is in God and in the future. The believer has nothing to fear of entering into coming judgment for sins, for they are forgiven and judgment is past for him. He looks forward to, and longs to see the fulfillment of the coming glories.

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23 -- FAITH OVERCOMES DIFFICULTIES

The exercise of the will is involved in order to surrender to God, to obey and to believe Him. Faith is the channel through which God operates and through which His blessings come to us. It is the means which moves God to remove difficulties. Faith puts poise and calmness into the soul of the believer and courage into his action. If there were no sin, no unbelief, no need, no conflict, no Satan, no opposition and no opposing forces, there would be no need for faith. Since we are in a world that is under the fall and the domination of Satan, and there are two great opposing forces at work, man is involved in this conflict, therefore, he must take his stand for one and against the other. The cause of truth, justice and righteousness are waged through faith: Taking the stand for God, heaven, truth, righteousness and holiness incites tests, resistance and opposition, and increases faith when faithful. By being true when tested and opposed, faith becomes stronger. There is a sense in which faith has no friends, and there is a sense in which faith has no foes. Faith's friends (that which would relieve it, help it, make it easier, relieve its strain and tension) really are its foes. Faith's foes (that which would oppose, hinder, restrain and try) become its friends. That which helps faith, hinders it, and what hinders it, helps faith, or that which would relieve it of its exercise weakens it.

I. Handicaps Become Opportunities Through Faith

"But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Gen. 50:20).

Handicaps are disadvantages which render success more difficult; however, if they are faced squarely and overcome, they become opportunities to the conqueror. Those who have no handicaps very seldom achieve unto success. From the very fact that a person strives to attain success incites opposition. Success is something which does not come to us, but something which can come only through a struggle. Faith has the power to convert handicaps into opportunities. To possess five senses is the normal state of a man. However, many people with all the senses do not make use of these to the full, or develop them to their capacity. When one sense becomes impaired, the other senses become more keen which in a measure compensates for the sense that has been lost. Some people who have lost the sense of sight become very keen in the sense of smell, or of feeling, or hearing. These are developed by becoming more sensitive to them. Some blind people can smell, feel or hear what people with sight see.

Joseph was destined to succeed in life. God had wisely planned his life and future. On the other hand, Satan was determined to defeat his career. His brothers virtually said, ".We will kill you, then what will become of your dreams?" God restrained them from doing so. Then they said, "Let us sell him and see what will become of his dreams?" The Lord virtually said, "You

can not kill him, however, by reason of that which you are doing to him, he will keep you alive so you will not die in the coming days of famine." From the very time that God gave Joseph a revelation of a great future, that also became the beginning of hindrances which were calculated to defeat him from attaining the place of promotion. Joseph being hated, conspired against, sold into Egypt, then being sold unto Potiphar, then being cast into prison and being kept in prison were hindrances, but through faith, and by facing every one, each hindrance became a stepping stone and the means of progress and promotion. By looking backward over his life, it will be observed that not one of them could have been left out.

II. Hindrances Become Stepping Stones Through Faith

"But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Phil. 1:12).

Hindrances are obstructions or obstacles between us and the success which we would attain. These tend to restrain or delay our progress. Through faith in God, the hindrances become stepping stones which lead higher by every step which is taken. In order for hindrances to become stepping stones, they must be faced and placed under the feet, even being stepped upon and by getting on top of them, then moving forward to the next one will get the hindrances behind us and put us farther along the way to success.

The apostle Paul had learned this lesson. Where ever he went, things came across his pathway that either would hinder or help the progress of the gospel. That was dependent on the attitude he took toward the obstacles in the way. By facing the hindrances and keeping his faith in the Lord, he was enabled to surmount them. They really became the means of furthering the gospel. The persecutions kept him on the move so that he preached at more points, -leaving more churches behind his tours. Then by writing unto some of the churches, inspired Epistles were left for all people.

III. Losses Lead to Richer Gifts Through Faith

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away... Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 1:21; 42:10).

Faith enabled Job to recognize ,everything as coming from the Lord, whether prosperity or adversity, gain or loss. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He did not recognize Satan at all, but absolutely ignored him. Instead of cursing God, he blessed Him altogether. In taking everything as from the Lord, Satan was outwitted. The losses of Job were many and great. He lost ten children, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 donkeys, and a great household of servants. These were swept away with great rapidity as blow after blow fell from Satan. Then Job lost his health. In due time the Lord brought him through and out of it all. Then the Lord gave him double: his health, even allowing him to live again as long (having been 70 years of age)- the Lord added 140 years to his life, ten children (the first set of ten were his in Paradise and were not lost), 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, 1,000 she donkeys and a very great household of servants. Satan

was defeated and not allowed to accuse Job any more even though the Lord blessed him with double. The faith of Job allowed God to do this, that is, give him richer gifts.

IV. Poverty Leads to a Richer Life Through Faith

"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him" (James 2:5).

Money is not the greatest riches a person may possess. To many it has become filthy lucre, and to others it has become a curse and the means of sorrow. It can not purchase character and lasting joys. Riches have been the means which have led to selfishness, self-trust and independence. Money in itself is not sin. It may become a blessing or a curse. By making good use of it, it becomes a blessing; and by misuse, it becomes a curse. Poverty has led many to trust in the Lord while others have trusted in their riches. Peter and John were fishermen. They left all to follow Christ and to become fishers of men. When they went into the temple to pray, they met a lame man. He looked to them for help. Peter was poor in wealth, but rich in faith. He said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Had he followed his old trade he would not have possessed a life of power and influence. Matthew gave up all: his position, his money and his salary. By becoming poor, he became rich in experience, life, influence, gospel labors, and heavenly rewards.

V. Thorns in the Flesh Become Means of Grace Through Faith

"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:7-9).

Paul gives an account in this Scripture of the method God employed to keep him humble, and the means whereby He could bestow more grace on him. Grace and humility are compatible and thrive together. Humility is a characteristic of greatness. Greatness is dangerous and may tend to pride. When pride is cherished, then greatness will take a fall. Paul was blessed with great revelations from the Lord, with great spiritual gifts and great success, which required much grace to keep him holy and in spiritual poise. Lest he should become exalted, there was given to him a thorn in the flesh. Many theories have been advanced in explaining the thorn in the flesh. Suffice it to say, it was a messenger of Satan to buffet Paul. It was painful and annoying to him. Satan meant it for Paul's hurt and defeat, but God made it a blessing in disguise to him, even the means for the bestowal of more grace on His servant. Would you enjoy a greater measure of the grace of God upon your life, then remember in this life there will be some thorns to be endured. Do you have many thorns which prick you? If so, then believe in the God of all grace for the bestowment of more grace on you.

VI. Trials Will Turn into Triumphs Through Faith

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (II Cor. 2:14).

Birds face the wind while rising and airplanes do the same. When one power faces another power, the one which triumphs over the other may employ and even be assisted by the opposing power in being borne up. Where there is no conflict, there can be no victory. The believer becomes a conqueror through Christ Who loves him. There is no power which can separate the believer from Christ. The power of men, of angels, of demons, of any created thing, are all unable to do so. Satan's armory, even the whole of his resources (tribulation, distress, persecutions, famine, nakedness, peril, sword) can not separate the believer from Christ. Through Christ we are more than conquerors, that is, we do not merely conquer, but are triumphers; or, we do not merely win, but we win and come out away ahead. Satan sends trials to defeat the saints, but through faith trials will turn into triumphs.

VII. Weaknesses Become Sources of Strength Through Faith

"My strength is made perfect in weakness... Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong" (II Cor. 12:9, 10).

The Lord said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." God is all strength and man is all weakness. If God were weakness, He could not do anything for us, and if man were all strength he would not have need for help. Since God has something we do not have, that is, strength, and we have something that God does not have, that is, weakness, and since God's strength is made perfect and manifested by being coupled on to our weakness, thus putting His strength in us, let us, therefore, let Him have our weakness and we take His strength. Paul had learned the great secret of being weak in himself and being strong in the Lord. He made the Lord his strength. Because of this he said, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." Another beautiful rendering of this verse is, "Therefore I take pleasure in being without strength, in insults, in being pinched, in being chased about, in being cooped up in a corner for Christ's sake, for when I am without strength, then am I dynamite."

It often is the case that strong people accomplish little along any line, and that the healthiest people do not live the longest. It has been proven again and again that the weak people accomplish more than many strong ones, and that sickly people and those who have chronic afflictions often live the longest. Nearly all our strength to do worth-while things comes from the struggle to overcome weakness. It is when we become conscious of our weaknesses, our failures, inabilities, and deficiencies that we begin to do something about them to overcome or master them. The Christian who becomes conscious of his own weaknesses, inabilities, failures and dependence, will by faith put his trust in the Lord, and make God his strength, then he becomes strong in the Lord and accomplishes much.

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God possesses an infinite affinity for faith. It touches Him instantly. We might express it thus: Just what electricity is in the material universe (and it abounds everywhere) and its laws must be observed and obeyed, then it will obey us, so faith is in the spiritual realm. It is as we employ faith wisely and obey its laws that it will respond to us and God will do all we believe He will do. Faith moves more quickly than electricity. When the diseased woman, who possessed faith, touched Christ, instantly virtue went out of Him and just that instant restoration and health entered into her.

I. Faith Pleases God

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21).

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb. 11:6).

God is not hard to please if we want to please Him. The best way in which we may please Him is to simply believe Him. He is very responsive to our faith. Without faith it is impossible to please Him, but with faith it is possible to please Him. He wills, commands and demands that we believe Him. This is just and right.

II. Faith Honors God

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father" (John 14:12).

Christ delights to do as He has promised. It gives Him joy to keep His word and pleasure to verify His promises to us. He will do so on condition of faith. It honors Him when He reveals to us that He can and does keep His promises. Faith honors God for it believes Him and that is what pleases Him.

III. Faith Touches God

"And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched Me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me" (Luke 8:46).

Faith in God touches Him the very instant it is exercised by a person. There is nothing that can hinder faith from penetrating the host of wickedness and the powers of darkness. Satan can not hinder faith from going through everything and touching God. The touch of faith is pleasing to God. The virtue which passed out of Christ evidently gave Him more joy and a better feeling than the new life, healing and health gave to the woman. He did not ask "Who touched Me?" to complain or to admit that He had been robbed, nor to cause any to think that she stole a blessing, or obtained it by illegal means. Christ wanted her to make a public confession and to compliment her faith.

IV. Faith is Located by the Holy Spirit

"He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum 1:7).

"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19:2).

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal... To another faith by the same Spirit." (I Cor. 12:7:9).

The Holy Spirit is the operating Agent of the Godhead on earth. He produces conviction and knows when a person believes. He comes in response to faith, and has affinity for faith. It does not matter where it is, whether in the heart of a thief, or behind prison bars, He locates it the instant faith acts, then He operates in harmony to that faith the same instant. The Holy Spirit operates in the realm of faith. The question is asked, "When the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith on the earth?" He will if there is any to be found. He always finds faith and that instantly.

V. Faith Moves God

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:19, 20).

Faith moves God and the hand that moves the universe. Unbelief does not move God. The unbelief of these disciples did not move God, therefore, He did not remove the mountain in their way, that is, cast out the demon. We are frail and weak, but He is strong. A small child may not be able to do much, but by its plea and taking hold of its mother's skirt, asks for bread and butter, moves mother and she gets the bread and butter for her child. Faith moves God and God moves or removes obstacles and brings things to pass for His believing children.

VI. Faith is Heaven's Currency

"As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (Matt. 8:13).

"Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, Yea, Lord" (Matt. 9:27).

God will transact business with us in accordance to the amount of faith we have in Him. Faith is heaven's currency. It is the condition on which God will do things for us. Currency is a medium of exchange. We can purchase in accordance to the amount of currency or coins we possess. We can buy all things that are for sale to the extent of the means we possess, that is, we may purchase anything by paying the fixed price for it if we possess the cash. God will operate to the end of our faith. Christ said, "According to your faith be it unto you" and, "as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." Our faith measures the amount of blessings we receive from God.

VII. Faith Will be Honored by God

"For them that honor Me, I will honor" (I Sam. 2:30).

"Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God" (Heb. 11:16).

The context indicates that the "wherefore" refers to 'the faith and action of the patriarchs, who instead of returning to their birthplace, remained as strangers in the land and died there. They did not look back, but they looked forward and believed the promises God made would in due time be fulfilled. This pleased God so well that He was not ashamed of the patriarchs. He is going to do something for them of which they will not be ashamed. Neither will He be ashamed of that which He will do in honor of their faith. He will do so much to reward their faith that He will not be ashamed to be called their God. In addition to giving Canaan to them, God will give to them a heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. Faith is never overlooked by the Lord. It is always richly rewarded.

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25 -- WHAT SAINTS BY FAITH DO

The Christian life is a life of faith. By faith the sinner becomes a saint. By faith the saint sustains and retains his relationship with God. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The Christian life is all a life of faith. What air is to the lungs of the physical man, faith is to the lungs of the spiritual man. From the physical birth there is the cry for breath (air), then breathing becomes natural and normal. In the spiritual birth there is the cry of faith, then spiritual life is contingent on faith and believing should become the normal state of the Christian life.

I. They Live By Faith

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Spiritual life is obtained through faith and it is retained by faith. We get it by believing and we keep it the way we get it. Young converts have a struggle along the line of believing. The Christian life is a life of faith. Here is where Satan attacks every Christian. The Christian life is likened to a fight. Paul calls it "the good fight." It is a fight of faith. Satan would attack us along this line -- our faith and shift the conflict into the realm of feeling, then he will say, "You are not saved because you do not feel like it." We fight with faith for our faith, and keep our faith by faith.

II. They Stand By Faith

"Thou standest by faith" (Romans 11:20).

Paul admonishes the believer what to do in the Christian conflict in these words: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore" (Eph. 6:13, 14). The Christian stands by faith. Stand means to take a firm and upright position, to grow, to be in the proper place and to

hold a place, to hold one's ground. Satan contests the standing and state of every Christian. Through unbelief, the enemy gets some to give up their position, their faith and their Christian experience. Paul says, "Withstand" and "stand." The Christian who by faith stands and does not retreat one step, but holds his ground with a firm grip when Satan makes an attack, has won and is victorious.

III. They Walk By Faith

"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). Walking implies progress and aggression. There is a growth in Christian experience as truly as there is a growth in all other things. Whenever anything ceases to grow, or to give off, it becomes static, or stagnant, or matures, or dies. There can not be any stopping place in the Christian life. Progress is a necessity to existence. The Christian makes his progress by faith, that is, he walks by faith. He can not make this walk by sight, or from the visible appearance of things.

IV. They Overcome the World By Faith

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

The world with its systems, its fads, its ways, its pleasures are fallen and cursed. They are contrary to the way of the cross and the righteousness of Christ. The friendship of the world is at enmity with God. "Those who do not go with it, and take up with it, the world will ridicule and persecute. The world would pile reproaches on the faithful Christian. This will require faith on our part and grace bestowed on us from the Lord to overcome the world which militates against the Christian. The world must be overcome by the Christian, or the Christian will be overcome by the world. Faith is the element the Christian must employ to overcome the world.

V. They Resist the Devil By Faith

"Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16).

The Devil shoots the fiery darts of unbelief and fear at the Christian. Many have been struck, laid low and succumbed to Satan's darts. The Romans went to battle with defensive weapons as well as offensive weapons. The defensive weapon was a shield. This shield was a large, oblong door-like weapon about four feet long and two and a half feet wide. This weapon was held by one hand and a sword in the other hand. It provided protection from the feet up to the head. This would intercept the darts which came from the enemy. They would strike the shield, then fall to the ground. What this shield was to the Roman soldier, faith is to the Christian soldier. Faith intercepts the darts of fear and doubts which Satan fires at all Christians when it is employed.

VI. They Work By Faith

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:21, 22).

Self-works are dead works. The accomplishments of the Christian which God accepts are not his own doings apart from God, but they are the workings of faith and God working through the believer. God works through faith. The justification of sinners is by faith without works. This is clearly illustrated in the life of Abraham as recorded in Genesis 15, and restated and affirmed in Romans 4. However, after a person is saved by faith, as a Christian he is justified by believing and working. This justification also is illustrated from the life of Abraham as taken from Genesis 22, and restated and affirmed in James 2:20-24. When the righteous demands and requirements are not wrought by the Christian he becomes disobedient, the faith ceases to function, and he loses out in his justification by faith and also the justification by works.

VII. They Rest By Faith

"For we which have believed do enter into rest" (Heb. 4:3).

Rest that is genuine and lasting is that of the cessation of a finished task. We always rest the best when a task is finished. Faith gets the job, and does the task. When the task is done then comes the cessation of labor, the responsibility is lifted and cares are all gone. That makes rest possible and refreshing. The sinner enters into soul rest by faith. When faith operates, then God saves the sinner and that very moment he enters into rest, for the work is done. The Christian places his faith in God, the responsibility and the cares are turned over to Him. This brings rest to the Christian. In order for the Christian to enjoy continual soul rest he must exercise a perpetual faith in Christ.

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26 -- ACTIONS OF FAITH

James says, "faith without works is dead," and "by works was faith made perfect." Faith can only become active as man obeys God. The Word of God is the foundation for our faith, and only as we obey the Word of God, will' faith become operative. Obedience makes faith operative. The operation of our faith precedes the operations of God. Human reason and unbelief would take the reverse order, that is, wait until God performed what He promised, before believing Him. In each of the several following examples, the divine instructions are given first, then men were to believe God and express their faith by obeying Him, and as they obeyed, God fulfilled His promises to them. Unbelief would have argued in each case that it was not of any use to do anything until God first brought to pass His promises, but that is not the way God fulfills His promises. Unbelief does not. obtain anything from God nor does it move God to act, for it does not act on God's promises. 'The action of our faith moves God into action. This is illustrated in the following examples.

I. Stepping Into Jordan Before the Parting of the River

"And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the Waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap," (Joshua 3:13).

Up to this time Israel had not thought how they would cross Jordan nor had they received any intimation from the Lord as to how they were to cross. It was just as well they did not know for the Lord did not want them to worry about it, and when the proper time came, He would make known unto them how they were to cross over. When the time came, it became a matter of faith and obedience with Israel to be able to cross. The priests bearing the ark on their shoulders had to step into the river, which was out of its banks, and get their feet wet before the Lord reversed the river in its flow and divided the river. The priests might have contended that they would not step into the water until it parted. Nothing would have been gained by it, but time would have been lost and the Lord would have been displeased. When they obeyed and took the first step after God's will was revealed, then God took the next step and all went well.

II. Shouting Before the Walls of Jericho Fell Down

"And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wail of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him" (Joshua 6:5).

Here also, the Lord instructed His people what to do in due time. The condition to be met by the people which required faith, obedience and patience, was to shout at the right moment, and that before the wall fell down. God said, "It shall come to pass," when they shout with a great shout, even as if the walls already had fallen, then the walls would fall. All was by divine appointment, and so it came to pass. On the part of Israel, it was by faith and not by force. Israel had been discouraged by the evil report of the unbelieving spies. They said, "The people is great and taller than we; the cities are great and walled to heaven" (Deut. 1:28), This suggestion was forever Silenced in the first battle fought after entering the land. God fought through the faith of His people. However, they had to believe and obey before Omnipotence operated.

III. Making a Cake for Elijah Before the Meal Multiplied

"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son" (I Kings 17:13).

It appears this widow was in a condition to receive aims, rather than to give entertainment. The God of Israel had arranged for all this. Elijah arrived there at the right moment and the woman was gathering sticks for a fire at the right moment. In His compassion, God sent Elijah to. this widow to provide for His servant and also the widow with her son. She was to board him, and by boarding him she would be enabled to provide for herself. She readily brought Elijah a drink at his first word, and without complaining, merely explaining her condition to the prophet she went and made him a cake first. It required faith and obedience on her part to make a little cake first for the prophet. She might have objected by saying, "Let the

children first be served," and "charity begins at home." Instead, she ventured on the promise of God, believed and obeyed first, then God verified His goodness and power by multiplying her meal until a new harvest came.

IV. Digging Ditches Before Water Flowed

"And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts" (II Kings 3:16, 17).

It is up to man to prepare to receive the blessings of God so that God may give them. In this case, Israel was to get ready to receive water by digging ditches when there was no wind, no clouds, nor rain. God could send water independently of clouds or rain. On the part of Israel it was up to them to believe and obey the divine instruction. God is not limited by ways and means. Elijah, by prayer, obtained water out of clouds, and Elisha by prayer obtained water without clouds. The ditch-diggers dug ditches in faith. After the digging the water came.

V. Dipping Seven Times in Jordan Before Being Cleansed

"And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (II Kings 5:10).

Elisha prescribed the method for the cure of Naaman's leprosy. It was not costly, but it required a little faith, more obedience and much humility. However, it was up to him to first wash seven times in the muddy Jordan river. Jordan, and not Abana, or Pharpar, was the river appointed, and if he expected a cure from the God of Israel, it was up to him to obey the true servant of the God of Israel. Naaman turned away in rage from the prophet. He was helped by his servants to get into the path of faith and obedience. He dipped himself in Jordan seven times. This met the divine requirement and after the seventh dipping he was instantly cleansed.

VI. Letting Net Down in Daytime While Fish Lay Deep

"And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:5).

Peter was possessed with a ready obedience to do as Christ had commanded. Though he had toiled all night and caught nothing, he knew the night time was the proper time to fish and that in the day time there was little use to fish because the water was clear and the fish lay deep. It seems he possessed little faith in letting down his nets, however, we cannot help but respect him for his prompt unquestioning obedience. His faith prompted instant obedience, and his obedience stimulated his faith. A faith without obedience or action does not obtain anything. Peter let down his net on the authority of Christ's words. As his faith gave expression to action, Christ constrained the fish to purposely swim into the net until it was full and filled two boats to the sinking point.

VII. Starting to Priests Before Cleansing

"And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (Luke 17:14).

Christ did not promise a cure to these lepers, but He commanded them "go show yourselves unto the priests." They had to go before they were cleansed. There were several reasons why Christ told them to go, and that, before they were cleansed. First, To fulfill the law. Second, As a testimony to the priests. Third, As a test to their faith. Fourth, As a test to their obedience. Fifth, As a test to their appreciation. Faith grows on the tree of obedience. As they went, they were cleansed.

In not one case did the Lord fail those Who manifested their faith by action. The Jordan divided after the priests stepped into the river. The walls fell down after the people shouted. The meal multiplied after a cake was made for Elijah. Naaman was cleansed after he dipped seven times. The water filled the ditches after they were dug. The net filled with fishes after Peter let it down. The ten lepers were cleansed after they went. When God has revealed His Word or will to us and we respond and obey, then He fulfills His promises.

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27 -- DARING ACTS OF FAITH

Some of the most daring acts of faith are recorded in the Bible as having been achieved by those who were strong in faith. It required courage that was strong and daring! which removed all fear and gave these heroes the spiritual poise and skill to carry out their objectives. The Lord was so well pleased with their faith that He gave them the skill and ability to become champions and heroic. They made the venture and literally went through with the Lord, and in their inward struggles they secretly fought these battles through, then outwardly they did the same. The courage of their actions was sufficient proof that they possessed great faith in God which enabled them to go forward with assurance and calmness. Their faith was so daring that it became a challenge to the opposing elements which terrified all opposition.

I. A Father Offered His Son

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:17-19).

God tried Abraham and Abraham stood the test. Probably Abraham possessed a greater measure of faith in God than any other character of all time. God does not allow anyone to be tempted above that which he is able to bear. No person was ever subjected to such a great test as was Abraham when the Lord called him to offer his beloved son, Isaac, in whom the promises of God were to be fulfilled. Abraham did not falter. He went through with God, and as far as his intentions and motives were concerned, he actually offered him to God as a burnt offering. God dared Abraham and Abraham dared God. God tried Abraham and Abraham tried God. God was

true to Abraham and Abraham was true to God. God trusted Abraham and Abraham trusted God. Abraham's faith was so strong, he actually believed God would raise his son Isaac up out of the ashes and give him back to him. Just as Abraham was in the act of slaying his son, God restrained him. The Lord accepted his will even as the act. Abraham rejoiced that his son was released and the Lord spoke to him the second time and gave to him the greatest blessing and revelation he ever received. God was greatly pleased and honored with Abraham's daring faith.

II. A Hero Conquered a Mountain Full of Giants

"And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife" (Judges 1:12, 13).

Caleb was a great hero and his daughter, Achsah, was much like her father; therefore, he desired a hero for her husband. Caleb made the proposition that the young man who would capture Debir he would give his daughter to be his wife. The offer Caleb made was open to all the young men of Israel. No doubt many desired to get the daughter, but lacked the courage to take Debir, which was full of giants. Othniel, a heroic, courageous, daring young man came to the front and took the city. He was running a great risk in attacking Debir. It was God's will that the city should be conquered and He would give the victory unto the young man who possessed faith and courage to tackle the task. God honored and rewarded the faith of Othniel. Caleb rewarded him by giving him Achsah, his daughter, to be his wife and also a south field for their future home. She also was daring and courageous, for she requested springs of water for a blessing, which she obtained.

III. A Soldier Attacked an Entire Army Garrison

"And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (I Sam. 14:6).

Jonathan possessed a daring faith. He believed that the Lord could give deliverance through a few as well as by many. His faith and wisdom beautifully contrast with the unbelief and folly of Saul his father. Jonathan did not consider the difficulties in the way, nor create any difficulties. He did not seek any honor, or that God should give the Philistines into his hand, but into the hand of Israel. His expectation was from God. The Lord would not allow that faith to be unhonored. He believed the Lord would work in their behalf. Jonathan knew the Philistines were God's enemies and that it was God's will that they should be destroyed, and if God could not give this victory unto Saul, his father, because of his failure, he believed God could give it to Israel through him and his armorbearer. So strong was his faith that he went into the very stronghold of the enemy, and if they were foolish enough to come down, he would wait for them. If they would bid him to come up, they would foolishly open his path into their very fortress. God wrought a great victory by striking terror into the hearts of the Philistines, by shaking the earth and by enabling him to defeat and destroy them.

IV. An Old Man Walked into a Den of Lions

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6:10).

Daniel was a man of prayer. He made prayer the first and great business of his life. He had many enemies because he was true and honest. Though many were against him, God, angels, and all heaven were with him and on his side. The decree which the presidents made and Darius allowed himself to be tricked into, did not alter Daniel's course in the least. He would rather go into the den of lions with God, having done his duty and kept up his prayer life, than to be a coward, compromiser or shirker. Daniel was evidently beyond eighty years of age when cast into the den of lions. He trusted God and God did not fail him. Daniel's faith and conduct honored God, therefore, God could not afford to lose Daniel. He sent His angel before Daniel and the lions' mouths were closed and Daniel's mouth was open and not Daniel's mouth closed and the lions' open as often pictured.

V. A Queen Appeared Unasked Before a King

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).

"And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter" (Esther 5:2).

Faith in God leads the believer to pursue the pathway of wisdom. God endues the believer with an intelligence to do the right thing which outwits the enemy. A crisis came to the Jews in the days of Queen Esther. Most certainly God allowed her, even promoted her to become queen to be the instrument of deliverance for her people. In the time of crisis she resolved to sacrifice her life for the sake of her people. Her request for three days and three nights of fasting (prayer meetings) in the palace and outside revealed her faith in God and that He is the Hope and Deliverer of Israel. Her intelligence and tact outwitted the enemy and had such a good reaction that brought destruction and defeat to him and gracious deliverance and honor to the Jews.

VI. A Man Walked on the Sea

"And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus" (Matt. 14:29).

People are too prone to see only the faults and failures in other lives, when they should observe their virtues and good qualities. Simon Peter is an interesting character. Too often people consider only his failures. However, he was full of commendable features. When we consider the incident of Christ walking on the sea and Peter's daring request, let us not merely see him as, a sinking man, but as a man of faith who actually possessed more faith and

admiration of Christ than any of the disciples. He said, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water." Christ said, "Come." Peter actually walked on the water. That was faith. None of the rest ventured to try it. Christ would have given the eleven the invitation to "Come" if they had asked Him. If their boat had drifted away, Christ could have led the twelve to the shore without losing a man. Peter momentarily took his eyes off Christ and doubted when he saw a wave about to strike him. He began to sink, however, he did not lose all his faith, neither did he backslide. He had faith in Christ and faith in prayer. Christ answered his prayer immediately, and gently rebuked him by saying, "O thou of little faith," which literally "O means, thou of faith for just a little time." Little here means time or duration and not quality. He had faith to come to Christ, and faith in Christ that He would rescue him, then he had faith to walk on the sea back into the ship. His faith was venturesome. One interesting thing about this incident is that Peter believed for a short time, then doubted and lost it, only for a shorter time, and instantly obtained faith again which took him safely through.

VII. A Prisoner Commanded Sailors and Soldiers

"Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 27:31).

Paul became a prisoner, however, he Would not claim to be the prisoner of men, but the prisoner of the Lord. It became necessary for him to make his appeal to Caesar in Rome because the Jews would not give him justice. On his way to Rome the entire crew passed through a storm in which the ship was wrecked. This storm continued many days. Paul, the prisoner of the Lord, became the heroic figure of the wave-swept deck of the storm-tossed ship. He became the minister to the passengers, captain, to the crew of the vessel, commander of the soldiers, and comforter to all on board. He ministered to their spiritual, mental and physical needs. While panic-stricken sailors, soldiers and passengers were vainly battling with the elements, Paul, the prisoner, was praying. He was pleading with God for the salvation of their souls and the preservation of their lives. God gave him the assurance that this would be so. This gave Paul courage and confidence and from then on until the ship was wrecked and all landed safely on the shore, he commanded all on board (275 beside Paul), and certainly he was divinely led in his course. His faith in God made him able for the task.

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28 -- FAITH WHICH APPEARED RECKLESS

Faith begets within us a daring courage and confidence. There come crises in the lives of God's people in which the inevitable will come to pass in which they will either become overcomers or shortcomers, triumph or be defeated. Examples are given in the Bible in which the faith of some believing saints appeared reckless, however, their faith was so daring it wrecked opposition and gloriously triumphed. These heroes of faith, as it were, took their lives into their own hands and ran a risk in which either great victories and success crowned their daring efforts, or defeat and disaster their doom. The God in Whom they trusted did not fail them. He honored their faith. He would not and could not fail them. He gave gracious deliverance to His own and glorified Himself through their faith.

I. When a Cripple Conquered Four Hundred and One Armed Men

"And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him" (Gen. 32:6).

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept" (Gen. 33:4).

The angel of the Lord wrestled all night with Jacob. The morning was at hand and it would not do for Jacob to behold the Stranger, therefore, He touched his thigh and dislocated it, leaving Jacob a cripple. The Lord prevailed with Jacob. Then Jacob laid hold on the Lord and would not let Him go until He blessed him. Jacob prevailed with the Lord and was blessed. God made him a mighty prince. Esau with murder in his heart, came with four hundred armed men to kill Jacob. Jacob, the cripple, but prince of God went forth in the name of the Lord with only a staff in his hand to meet the 401 armed men. Jacob's action seemed presumptuous and preposterous, and naturally he had no chance of escaping or of defending himself. But by faith in God, he boldly, cheerfully and humbly met this army. God did not fail him. There was an unseen army present with Jacob and an unseen, but mightily felt power which so overpowered Esau that led him to run to meet Jacob in tears, while four hundred armed men looked on in confusion, thinking this was but a sham battle. By faith, Jacob, as a man prevailed over 401 men.

II. When a Farmer's Wife Killed a Commander-in-chief

"Then Jael, Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail "into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died" (Judges 4:21).

Barak had been called to take twelve thousand men and attack Jabin's army of which Sisera was Commander-in-chief and defeat them, thereby, breaking the Canaanitish oppression. He lacked faith to go alone, therefore, Deborah went with him, however, he lost the honor of winning the battle. God did not honor him, for he did not fully honor God. During the battle in which the Canaanites were destroyed, Sisera fled and hid in Jael's tent. He knew the law of his time that if a man went into a married woman's tent, he was condemned to death and also the woman. He was guilty of a cruel act which endangered his life and the life of Jael. She had given him entertainment, but he took advantage of the hospitality. Jael, full of faith and courage, undertook a daring act. Her faith lifted her above the dangerous situation to which Sisera subjected her. By his action he revealed the fact he was not fit to live. By her faith, courage and wisdom she nailed this traitor of her life and oppressor of Israel to the ground and so he died. Her action is highly complimented in the Bible.

III. When a Lover Killed a Lion on a Courtship Journey

"Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord

came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done" (Judges 14:5, 6).

When the Lord called Samson, He wanted to do something which had been untried before. That was to employ a man single-handed to begin to deliver Israel from the oppression of the Philistines by enduing that man with superhuman strength. By the strength he possessed he was to be an enigma to the Philistines.

It was Satan's object to destroy or defeat Samson. Samson loved a woman of the Philistines, and the Bible says it was of the Lord to seek an occasion against them. On his way to see the woman he loved, a young lion met him suddenly. It was up to Samson to kill the lion, or be killed by the lion. An object of love inspired him to kill the lion so that he could continue on his way to court and marry the girl he loved. It appeared presumptuous for him to attack the lion without any weapons and yet it would have been more fatal to flee. In faith and by being, apparently reckless, he faced the lion and as he did so the Spirit of the Lord came on him and in the power of the Lord he killed the lion and cast him aside. Later the bees stored honey in the carcass and it became an occasion for Samson to propound a riddle to the Philistines which led to him becoming angry and thus getting started to destroy them.

IV. When a Lad Boldly Met and Killed a Giant

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied" (I Samuel 17:45).

David's speech was full of a daring faith in God, yet before hand, he ascribes the glory to the God of Israel. He came by divine arrangement on the battle field at the instant the giant came forth to defy the God and the people of Israel. David faced the challenge. It appears his faith was reckless, useless and presumptuous. He did on short order (by divine arrangement) what Saul and the entire army of Israel could not do in forty days, nor ever could do. David ran to meet the giant and did to him exactly as he prophesied. He came forth victorious with the head of the giant in his hands and his carcass on the ground. The battle was started and mostly won when Goliath was decapitated. Then the Philistines were routed and Israel pursued them. David went in faith and the name of the Lord, and God could not fail him neither could David fail. Through faith he accomplished what Saul and the entire army could not do.

V. When a Hero Attacked a Lion in a Pit in Time of Snow

"And Benaiah the son of Jehoida, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow" (II Samuel 23:20).

Benaiah was one of the mighty men of David. He accomplished many mighty acts. It was through faith that he became a valiant man. His faith, too, seems very reckless and daring, but the God in Whom he trusted did not fail him. Benaiah killed two lion-like men of Moab, then he with just a staff in hand boldly charged an Egyptian of fierce countenance, who had a spear in

his hand, but he took the spear from him and " killed him with his own spear. However, the greatest feat of skill and power which he accomplished was to go down into a pit in time of snow to kill a lion, While others in time of snow would not have ventured out, but stayed by a fire, he went out in the cold and tracked a lion to his hiding place in a pit and there killed him. Faith made Benaiah a valiant, useful and heroic man. He may well be classed as one of "the mighty men whom David had."

VI. When One Soldier Fought Eight Hundred Men Single-handed

"The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time" (II Sam. 23:8).

Adino, the Eznite, was the mightiest of David's mighty men. It is recorded of him that, "he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time." This was a task equal for eight hundred men. For him to have met one Philistine, the chances to win or lose would have been "fifty-fifty." The odds against him were eight hundred. The faith of Adino was very daring and humanly appeared as reckless. He boldly and single-handed met the attack and killed the eight hundred. How did he accomplish the triumphant feat? By faith he "waxed valiant in fight." The character of such an achievement was supernatural. The Lord was with him and clothed him with power which enabled him to achieve this great victory.

VII. When Three Boys Walked Into a Burning Furnace

"If it be so, our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Dan. 3:17, 18).

Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, whom Nebuchadnezzar named Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were a courageous trio. This trio of boys dared to stand alone even though it enraged the king and brought the disapproval of all political officials against them. Their decision was firm and final. They believed God could deliver them and even if He did not, they assured the king they would not bow down to worship his image. Their faith and courage seemed most daring and reckless. God had not given them any promise of deliverance. The courage, faith and faithfulness so insulted the king that he ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than before. They were bound and cast into the furnace. The flame scorched the king's most mighty men, but this courageous trio landed in the midst of the fire unharmed. The fire only consumed their bands and set them free. The Lord came down and kept company with them, walking around with them in the midst of the fire. They had a blessed time walking with the Lord in the fire, and remained there until Nebuchadnezzar's plans failed and the golden image was not dedicated. God was glorified and the true religion was advertised over the entire empire.

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A stratagem is a trick in warfare for deceiving the enemy. Faith in God will outwit Satan. It will lead people out of any trap Satan employed in capturing them. Faith is the key which will lead any pilgrim out of doubting castle and enable him to escape Giant Despair. Faith does not conduct itself in the same manner in all people. However, faith will give people the victory over their trials, or victory in their trials. God will honor faith and enable all who put their trust in Him to overcome, whether it is by complete deliverance or by enabling them to, endure. God has promised to make a way of escape.

I. The Faith Which Led to Death Rather than to Disobedience

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4).

Abel took the way of faith and obedience. This was God's way. Cain followed his own way which was the way of unbelief, disobedience, rebellion and God-defiance. This was the way of Satan and sin. Abel came to God in faith. He came according to the divine revelation which led to redemption by a substitutionary sacrifice. God accepted his obedience, his faith and his sacrifice: God gave him the evidence of his acceptance most certainly by consuming his offering by fire. This led Cain to envy his brother. He talked with him, then killed him. Abel became a martyr and Cain a murderer. The course Abel pursued cost him his life. But it was the way of faith and it led to a better life and a better world. A Christian martyr's death is a noble and triumphant death. Abel died to live and Cain lived to die. Abel died, but will live eternally; Cain lived, but will die eternally. It is better to be dead and live eternally than to be alive and die eternally. Physical death is not the worst thing that can happen to people. There are some things that are much worse than physical death. It would be better to get converted and die, then go to heaven to live for ever, than to live in sin and live a score of years longer, then die and go to hell to die for ever.

II. The Faith Which Outflanked Death

"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" (Heb. 11:5).

Enoch was a saint and prophet. He knew judgment was coming on the earth. He went to walking with God. The flood was before him and death was on his track. Naturally one or the other would eventually overtake him. But Enoch, by faith, walked with God. This walk was perfect and pleasing in the sight of God. Faith enabled him to walk so: closely to God that neither judgment nor death could get close to him. He pursued a different route in life -- a route which death could not pursue. He was so near to God that he outflanked death. Death could not enter into God's presence. His walk was continuous, steady and without a break. The "old king terror" could never catch Enoch off guard or get between him and God. Enoch very evidently desired and prayed to be translated and actually by faith was translated that he should not see death.

III. The Faith Which Prepared Before an Emergency

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

By faith Noah was warned of God. This, warning moved him with fear. This holy fear moved him to go to work. He prepared an ark as a shelter for his entire house. All perished but he and his household in the time of the deluge. God took possession of the ark. He was the first One to occupy the ark. He gave Noah and his household the invitation to "Come." They entered in and were safely sheltered by the Lord. While the flood was prevailing Noah had some grand sailing in the ark, but all on the outside did some great wailing before they perished, Faith will lead to every preparation for all coming emergencies.

IV. The Faith Which Outwitted a Subtle King

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment" (Heb. 11:23).

Satan sought to exterminate the entire Hebrew race. Pharaoh instigated by Satan decreed a foolish law that all boy babies of the Hebrews should be killed at birth. This law was not carried out by the Hebrews. Then he made another law which was as, foolish, which was that all the Hebrew sons should be cast into the Nile River at birth. At this time Moses was born. Faith enabled his parents to hide him the first three months of his life. They did so because they were not afraid of the king's commandments. Faith then led his mother to do a strange thing, but the right thing. She made an ark, then placed him in it and put the ark in the river. She took her hands off and committed him into God's hands, and verily God took him in His hands. Moses was safe and now neither his mother nor he had anything to fear. Pharaoh's daughter came along and found him. She paid the mother to nurse him, then she adopted him as her own son to train him to become the oncoming king -- a son, whom her father had decreed should be drowned.

V. The Faith Which Made a Strange Choice

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hob. 11:24, 25).

The faith of Moses' mother moved God to take care of her son for the first forty years of his life. Then Moses had to make his own choice. Faith led him to make the right choice. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He refused to become the oncoming king of Egypt. The glory, salary and honor were too base, too brief, too cheap, and too disgusting to him. He wanted heavenly, holy, spiritual and eternal blessings. To him the reproaches of Christ and to suffer with God's people were preferred to becoming a king for a little while. In God's time, he became the deliverer of Israel and by the Lord's leadings, he led Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his army pursued. One Hebrew son born in a time when according to the law of a wicked king should have been drowned, but who had been adopted and reared in the

courts of the king, now stretched forth his rod over the sea and it came together and drowned the king of Egypt and all the men of his army. Moses chose to be the son of the King of kings, to go and suffer with God's people on earth and then to forever reign with them in eternity.

VI. The Faith Which Ignored the Law and Embraced Grace

"An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever" (Deut. 23:3).

The law excluded eunuchs, bastards, Ammonites and Moabites from entering: into the congregation of the Lord. The history of Moab up to this time had been shameful. Ruth was a Moabitess. She had been bereft and had no strong arm on which to lean. She was poor and sad, but she was virtuous. A crisis came into her life when she and her mother-in-law came to the border line. Before her were Canaan, Bethlehem, God's people, the true religion, hope, a husband, a home and heaven. Behind her were Moab, Chemosh (her former god) idolatry, her old companions, sin, death and hell. She did not consider the law, but her faith led her to take the way of grace. The decision she made was prompt, personal, firm and final. When she would not turn back, but said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me," Ruth did not possess an ignorant stubbornness, but an intelligent firmness. Her devotion was spontaneous and supreme. She made the right choice. She cast her lot with the people of God. Faith helped her to make the right choice. God and grace honored her. She obtained a prince of Judah for a husband, a rich home, much happiness, great honor, for she married into the ancestry of Christ and her son and descendants constitute a part of the Messianic line. This fell to her lot in life on earth. In the life after death she will enjoy and obtain more and greater blessings.

VII. The Faith Which Accepted What Others Did Not Want

"And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table" (Matt. 15:27).

Christ and His disciples made a trip into Tyre and Sidon, specifically to give us the incident of the healing of a Canaanitish woman's daughter. She heard of His presence and followed Christ, crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David." Christ answered her not a word. It seems He treated her coldly and indifferently, however, she had no claim on Him as the son of David and in keeping with His mission, He could not legally do anything for her on her own claims, therefore, Christ kept silent. The disciples said, "Send her away." He answered that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then she humbled herself somewhat and prayed, "Lord, help me." Christ gave her another hard jolt by saying that it was not right to take the food from the table and cast it to dogs. This would have insulted many, but it did not insult this woman. It strengthened her faith and increased her courage. She took her rightful place and in humility she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs (pups) eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table." When she took her rightful place (that of a dog, as under the table and not by it, as willing only to accept the crumbs and scraps) the disciples could not object,

neither could Christ deny her. She obtained all she needed and wanted. Faith leads us to take our rightful place before God and then we obtain all we need and no person dares to object.

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30 -- THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNBELIEF

Faith brings blessed results. Since unbelief is the very opposite of faith, it brings fearful results. Even as the triumphs of faith are many, so the defeats of unbelief also are many. The way of unbelief leads away from God, from heaven, from holiness, from victory and from success. Unbelief leads to sin, to defeat, to disaster and to destruction.

I. Unbelief Grieves God

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hob. 11:6).

Since faith pleases God and brings victory, and unbelief is the opposite of faith, it is logical to assume that unbelief has the opposite effect on God and on men, therefore, unbelief grieves God and brings defeat to men. God loves men and seeks their highest good. He fully knows the disaster from the beginning to the end which unbelief brings to every unbeliever. He is greatly grieved because of unbelief.

II. Unbelief is Blinding

"And when He was come in, He saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn. But when He had put them all out, He taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with Him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise" (Mark 5:39-41).

"The world says, "Seeing is believing." In reality, those who do not believe a thing till after it has happened, do not possess faith at all, but only sight. Faith does not come by first seeing or feeling a thing. To the man of faith "Believing is seeing," but to the man of unbelief "Seeing is only seeing." The ruler of the synagogue who came to Christ was informed by certain unbelievers not to trouble Christ for his daughter was dead. Christ encouraged the ruler not to be afraid, only to believe. Christ entered the death chamber and ordered all weeping stopped for she was not dead to Him. They laughed Christ to scorn. He ordered them all out. If they would: not believe His Person, power, and ability, neither would they see His power manifested. Christ said to Martha, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Christ taught that believing precedes seeing. Verily unbelief is blinding and is willful ignorance.

III. Unbelief Arouses the Question "Why?"

"They spake against God; they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" (Ps. 78:19).

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief" (Matt. 17:19, 20).

Unbelief asks the question "Why?" as though it were impossible, or that things which can not be understood can not come to pass. Children that are reluctant to obey generally ask "Why." They doubt the wisdom of doing what they are commanded to do, as though they knew better than their parents. Unbelief and disobedience go hand in hand. Faith never asks God "Why," as though God did not know what was best. Faith and obedience go hand in hand. Unbelief does not get things from God, therefore, it wants to know "why."

IV. Unbelief Makes People Nearsighted

"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (II Peter 1:9).

The antecedents of "these things" are mentioned in the context. The starting point of spiritual arithmetic is faith. To faith there follows an addition of Christian virtues. Peter writes that he who lacks "these things" that is, the Christian virtues, is blind and cannot see afar off: Unbelief is very nearsighted. It wants to see, but does not want to believe. Unbelief leads people to want to see things, to feel them, to be impatient and not to wait for things, but wants them right away.

V. Unbelief Makes People Selfish

"But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we... The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants... and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Num. 13:31-33).

A selfish person cares unduly or supremely for himself, even regarding his own comfort and advantage in disregard, or at the expense of others. The ten spies were full of unbelief, therefore, they doubted God; magnified difficulties; said, "we be not able to go up," gave an evil report; saw giants; were fearful; depreciated God; spelled God with a little "g" and giants with a capital "G;" saw themselves as grasshoppers in the sight of the giants; employed nine personal pronouns and left God out of their report; said "We saw" and walked by sight. They never again saw or entered Canaan, for they died by a plague before God Whom they insulted. Unbelief makes people very selfish and self-centered.

VI. Unbelief Troubles the Heart

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

Unbelief troubles the heart. It brings hurry and confusion. The unbelieving heart becomes like the troubled sea in the time of storm. The heart needs rest as well as any other organ of the

body. The only remedy which will quiet and rest the heart is faith. When faith is lacking and unbelief dominates the heart, an inward storm rages that troubles the heart.

VII. Unbelief Hinders God

"Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" (Ps. 78:41).

"And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt. 13:58).

Unbelief limits God. The Lord would have done much more for the Israelites if they had not limited Him by their unbelief. Christ could not do many mighty works at His own home town, Nazareth. The people there doubted His virgin birth, His Person, His claims and His power. They doubted from whence He came and why He came. By doubting Him thus, they brought Him in their estimation down to the level of all other men, and as such He could do but little for them. Their unbelief hindered Him. The trouble lay with them and not with Him.

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31 -- WHAT BECOMES OF UNBELIEVERS

Man fell through unbelief and disobedience, and the way back to God is through faith and obedience. The person who does not seek the pathway of obedience and faith, but willfully chooses the way of sin and rebellion to God, which is the way of unbelief and disobedience, is rightfully designated an unbeliever. To remain an unbeliever is a willful act, therefore, God is just in condemning him even as He is just in rewarding the faithful.

I. They Harden Their Own Necks

"Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God" (II Kings 17:14).

Unbelief like faith involves the will and the action of the heart. Unbelief leads to the hardening of the neck. The hardening of the neck means to take the attitude, "I do not want to," "I do not have to" and, "No one can make me do it." A goat is noted for his stubbornness and willfulness. He will set his neck that his head will not come down. A horse that becomes stubborn will stiffen its neck and take the bit in its mouth. The attitude and action of the inward man (the spirit) is manifested in the outward man (the body). The willful and stubborn attitude manifests itself in the muscles of the shoulders and neck which become rigid and set, and is the attitude "I will not" and "I don't have to."

II. They are Now Under Condemnation

"But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" {John 3:18}.

When the only Savior and way of salvation is rejected through unbelief, the unbeliever willfully remains under condemnation, even as "he that believeth" has made the willful choice to remain no longer under condemnation. God commands and commends faith, because it is the way of deliverance and salvation. Verily, it is God's way. God condemns unbelief, because it is the way of condemnation and sin. This is the way of Satan and perdition.

III. They Now Have the Wrath of God Abiding on Them

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

The wrath of God rests or "abideth," that is, remains on the unbelievers. Those who believe on the Son of God do not abide under the wrath of God because the wrath of God has been removed. God is sorely displeased with all unbelievers, because the provision He has made for their salvation and freely offered to them on condition of faith has been willfully rejected on their part. God condemns the way of unbelief because it is the way of independence and leads to perdition. His wrath will abide on unbelievers so long as they do not believe on His Son, and this wrath will not be removed until they believe that Christ is the Son of God.

IV. They Shall Die in Their Sins

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

The only power which can deliver unbelievers from sin is the grace of God. The only Savior Who can redeem them from sin is Christ the Son of God. The only condition on which they can be saved is to believe that Christ is the Son of God and the Savior. The only fate which comes to unbelievers is, they will die in their sins. This means their destiny will be sealed eternally, therefore, their only place to spend eternity will be in hell.

V. They Shall not Enter into Rest

"So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19).

"Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. 4:11).

Unbelief kept Israel out of Canaan. Faith would have taken them into the land. Because Israel would not go in faith with God into Canaan, He would not go in with them in unbelief; therefore, they had to stay in the wilderness and perish. Canaan with its houses, vineyards, trees and fields, was to become their settled home, and there they were to rest. Unbelief kept them out of rest. Faith brings rest to the soul because it saves from sin and puts us in Christ where we have an eternal abiding place, then in due time He will bring us to Him in heaven to abide with Him. The only way man can enter into soul rest and into heaven is through faith. Unbelief will keep people out of soul rest and shut them out of heaven.

VI. They Shall be Destroyed

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

Israel had faith to come out of Egypt, but did not have faith to enter into Canaan. That generation died in the wilderness. Men are more dependent on God than they realize. Every good gift (all material and earthly blessings) and every perfect gift (all spiritual and heavenly blessings) come from God. The breath and times of all men are in God's hands. God is good to all men, allowing them to live a long life in which to call on Him for salvation. If men do not believe in Him, but persist to live in unbelief, God will give them up. When God gives men up to their unbelief and sins, only disaster and destruction await them.

VII. They Shall be Cast into the Lake of Fire

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

The lake of fire will be the final doom of all the wicked. John designates eight classes of sinful people as being cast there. The second class is that of the unbelieving. The unbelieving are those who are faithless, that is, without faith. Probably this class will be greater than any other class, and in a sense will include all other classes. As faith leads to a holy life and to heaven, so unbelief will lead to a sinful life and the lake of fire.

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32 -- HOW UNBELIEF MANIFESTS ITSELF

Faith is a condition of the heart and the will, and not of the intellect. So it is with unbelief. It also is a condition of the heart and the will. We will to believe the Bible with its truth and promises, and we will not to believe God's truth. Unbelief has the very opposite effect of faith. God has chosen faith as the one condition on which He operates in our behalf, so Satan employs unbelief through which he Operates. Faith in God hinders Satan, for it really is doubting him, therefore, he can not do anything for or through man, because he does not obtain man's will and consent. Unbelief (or faith in Satan) hinders God, for that is doubting God, therefore, He can not do anything for or through man, because He does not obtain man's will or consent. Faith in God yields the will to Him and obeys His commandments. Faith in Satan (unbelief in God) yields the will to him (Satan) and obeys his biddings.

I. It Hardens the Heart

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12).

Unbelief proceeds from an evil heart. Faith in God tenderizes the heart. God made the heart of man to believe in Him, to retain Him in his thoughts, motives, desires and will. This was the original purpose of God for man and it tended to a holy, wholesome, healthful, happy life. It was the norm for man as God made him. Unbelief has the very opposite effect of faith. Unbelief leads away from this original objective, to a degenerate state, therefore, brings unhealth, a sinful condition, sorrow and a most unwholesome state of living. This hardens the heart, that is, makes it bitter, willful, stubborn and resentful to Christ.

II. It Rejects Christ

"Of sin, because they believe not on me" (John 16:9).

Faith accepts Christ. The only way Christ can be received is through faith. Unbelief crowds Him out and wills not to have Him, but it makes room for sin, for it gives consent to Satan. Satan is antagonistic to Christ. These two do not get along together. Our wills will determine whether Christ or Satan will win in relation to our salvation and the possession of our souls. Faith and unbelief also are antagonistic, the one to the other. Here again it will be our wills which will determine whether faith in God (unbelief in Satan) or faith in Satan (unbelief in God) will be triumphant. Unbelief in God will give Satan the right to claim the unbeliever and to employ his service.

III. It Rejects the Scriptures

"Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not His Word" (Ps. 106:24).

The unbelief that rejects Christ will also reject the Scriptures. The living Word (Christ) and the written Word (Bible) are inseparable as to our belief, unbelief, acceptance or rejection of them. A person can not believe the one and reject the other. The written Word reveals the living Word, and the living Word reveals the written Word. To accept and believe one implies the acceptance of the other and the same with unbelief.

IV. It Rejects the Gospel

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53:1).

Even as unbelief rejects Christ and the Bible, so it will reject the gospel. The gospel reveals Christ and the way of salvation. Faith cometh by hearing the gospel when the will becomes surrendered to God, but when people hear and do not obey, that leads to rejection, and the rejection of the gospel leads to unbelief. Faith accepts the gospel. The "report" (the record in the Bible) and the "arm of the Lord" (the miracle power of Christ) when revealed and reported should be believed and accepted, but when they are not accepted, it leads to unbelief and hardness of heart. When light is not accepted it brings darkness and when the truth is not believed, it leads to unbelief.

V. It Rejects the Evidence of Miracles

"But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him" (John 12:37).

It was a dishonor and grief to God that Christ's teachings and miracles met with so little acceptance. The miracles which He performed should have convinced all the people of His claims. They saw His miracles, but their hearts were so depraved and prejudiced that they did not believe the veracity of them. Since the Jews in Christ's day did not want to believe that He was the Son of God, neither would they believe His miracles. Unbelief did not want to accept the evidence of Christ's miracles, even as it rejected Christ, the Bible and the gospel. Those who willfully close their eyes to the truth and harden their hearts will be possessed with unbelief.

VI. It Questions the Power of God

"Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof" (II Kings 7:2).

"Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people? Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth" (Ps. 78:19-21).

Faith does not need to ask any questions relative to the ability of God. It accepts God, His claims and the Bible as true, settled and final. That satisfies faith and also God. Unbelief will scoff and sneer at the power of God. The peer of Israel on whose hand the king leaned heard the words of the prophet of the Lord, and openly declared his unbelief concerning the prophetic prediction. He thought it would be impossible for either a measure of flour or two measures of barley to be sold for a shekel in the gates of the city in those days of famine. He thought it impossible, unless God would rain it down from heaven. A doom was passed on him for his infidelity. Unbelief is a sin which greatly displeases and dishonors God. Israel in the wilderness expressed their unbelief after they had witnessed the miraculous power of God, such as the dividing of the Red Sea, etc. Even then they said, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can He give bread also? Can He provide flesh for His people?" The Psalmist said, "Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth." Unbelief can always ask a plenty of foolish questions.

VII. It Departs from God

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12).

Faith brings us nigh to God and God nigh to us. Unbelief deliberately departs from God. The unbelieving heart is an evil heart. When the heart distrusts God, it will soon desert God and then depart from Him. An evil heart of unbelief is back of all sinning. The unbelief in Hebrews 3:12, means a willful refusal to believe. Throughout the four Gospels it is very clearly revealed that those who believed in Christ came unto Him, and those who did not believe, departed from

Him. We read of some who believed not, that they walked no more with Him, and others went out one by one and Jesus was left alone. Cain would not believe God and he went from the presence of the Lord. And so it ever has been since Cain, all who believed not departed from the presence of God.

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33 -- THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH

There is a language in everything, either spoken or unexpressed. Even so there is a language in faith. God understands the language of faith. The faith of every person expresses or manifests itself in some manner, or in words. Christ said, "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The mouth, more than anything else, is the index to the heart. That which is in the heart will express itself in words. Faith often expresses itself in a spoken language. On the other hand, what we say may help to increase our own faith, or hinder it. The sayings of some Bible characters will be given which manifest the faith they possessed.

I. The Language of Utmost Trust -- Abraham

"I and the lad will go... and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5).

The Lord called Abraham to offer his son Isaac for a burnt offering. He had assured him that through Isaac his seed would be called, and all the promises He had made to him would be fulfilled through his son. Before this, whenever the Lord gave him a command, He also gave him a promise to step out on, but on this occasion the Lord did not give him any promise, or even a reason for doing so. To offer up his beloved son undoubtedly was harder for him to undertake than to die. His obedience was prompt and his faith unwavering. Just as he left the young men at the foot of the mountain, before going up, he said, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This was the language of faith. Abraham reasoned that if he offered his son to God, there absolutely was no other way for God to fulfill His promises than to raise his son Isaac up out of the ashes and give him back to him. Abraham actually believed that was what God would do, and his faith expressed itself in the language of assuring the young men that both would return when they were through worshipping. His words were the language of absolute trust in God. He did not know why God called him to offer Isaac, but he was positive that God would bring to pass all He had promised after the sacrifice and allow his son Isaac to return with him.

II. The Language of Perfect Submission -- Job

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job 13:15).

Job did not know anything about the council of the sons of God held in heaven and that Satan also was present and made accusations of him, nor that he was granted the permission to destroy, or remove all he possessed, neither that God gave him permission to afflict him. He did not know the outcome of his sickness. No light shone on him during his siege of sickness. All was dark around him. His three friends were miserable comforters to him. They reasoned he had sinned and his sin was greater than his punishment. Job retained his integrity in God. He told the

three friends that if God slew him, he still would trust in Him. This was the language coupled with utmost submission. Such a faith was bound to win in the end. God vindicated his faith and restored to him double.

III. The Language of Firm Courage -- Caleb

"We are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30).

Caleb was noted for his courage. He was so thrilled and captivated by Canaan, the good land, and with its fruits, that he at once wanted to go without any delay to possess it. He had no fear of the giants, for he knew God would help them overcome the giants. When the ten spies gave a report of unbelief which discouraged the people, Caleb stilled them and with the language of faith said, "We are well able to overcome it." He gave a report as it was in his heart. He spelled God with a capital "G" and giants with a little "g." He saw possibilities. The giants appeared as grasshoppers to him, and he declared "they are bread for us." He knew the Lord was with them, therefore, he could say to all "Fear not." He lived and walked by faith. Faith was shining forth from his words, his desires, his conduct, his ambitions and all his emotions. He pleased the Lord and was preserved to enter into the land.

IV. The Language of Blessed Assurance -- David

"This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand" (I Sam. 17:46).

David was stirred tremendously when he entered the army of Israel and saw the Philistine giant appear to challenge Israel and the God of Israel. The anointing of the Lord was upon him. He was God's chosen man and he needed a public occasion to demonstrate the Lord's power through him. His three brothers who were in the army became indignant at him and sought to discourage him, and wanted to know why he was there. He told them "Is there not a cause?" There was a cause why he was there. He was God's anointed and appointed man to be the oncoming king. It was God's will that he should be there. David was stirred by a righteous indignation and became very ambitious to fight the giant. He inquired how to get permission to attack Goliath. So confident was he that the Lord would deliver him into his hands that he was blessed and his cup of joy was running over in the anticipation of the victory. He meekly, calmly and confidently ran to meet the giant, which enraged the giant so that he cursed David, Israel and Jehovah. In the language of faith, David Said, "I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts... This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowl of the air." He did exactly what he told the giant he would do and he did so immediately.

V. The Language of Absolute Devotion -- Three Hebrews

"If it be so, our God... is able to deliver us... but if not... we will not serve thy gods" (Dan. 3:17, 18).

The three Hebrew boys were subjected to a very severe test, even to indulge in the most popular and subtle form of idolatry. The king of Babylon made it mandatory, that all who would

not fall down to worship the image he had made at the time his orchestra played, should be cast into a burning fiery furnace. These boys loved their God more than they loved their own lives. Their hearts were fixed and settled that they would not bow down, nor worship the image. At the sound of the music all fell down to worship but the three Hebrews. They were accused and brought before the king. In his rage, he offered them another chance. They did not want another chance, their hearts were set and right with their God. They informed the king their God could deliver them, but if He did not, they would not worship the image. This was the language of faith. Such faith honored God and was honored by God. God brought them through and miraculously preserved their lives. The king's plans failed and the image never was dedicated, nor the new idolatrous religion inaugurated.

VI. The Language of Divine Recognition -- Centurion

"Say in a word and my servant shall be healed" (Lu. 7:7).

The centurion recognized the divine authority and power of Christ and believed in the power of His word. Unlike the Jews, who wanted to see signs before they would believe, he would rather take the word of Christ and rest his faith on His spoken word. The word of Christ was assuring and satisfying to him. His faith greatly pleased Christ., Christ assured him his servant would live and recover, then Christ sent him back in peace. This centurion expressed great faith in Christ by what he said. Let us recognize Christ's Person, power and authority, and believe His Word, then, we too, may go in peace.

VII. The Language of a Life-receiving Faith -- Our Mouth

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart... thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

The mouth needs to be employed in connection with the heart in getting saved and in keeping saved. Confession and faith go together. Confessing with the mouth and believing with the heart are God's requirements. The mouth is to confess the Lord Jesus, and the heart to believe that He died and rose again. This will lead to personal salvation. This is the way to get saved and to keep saved.

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THE END