

January 4, 2021

The Spirit of Faith:

***What does the word desire mean to you? It is a strong feeling of wanting to have something or hoping for something to happen.*

***Where does desire come from? Our soul or, in other words, our mind.*

Desire is a powerful substance. It can be used in a positive manner or negatively. Two biblical examples of negative behavior are Samson and Delilah and David and Bathsheba. Their desires overpowered their faith, and they lost sight of God.

The source of Samson and David's problem was their body and soul. Their body and soul were not under subjection to the spirit.

Let's Review the Parts of Our Being:

Body/our dwelling: speech, five senses, and actions

Soul/our personality: mind, will, emotions, intellect, conscience, heart.

Spirit/determines our identity {in Christ}: intuition, conscience, and communion with God.

Man is a spirit that possesses a soul and lives in a body.

When we are born again, our spirit man becomes brand new, recreated in the very image and likeness of God. If we want to mature as Christian, we must learn to develop our spirit man.

When our soul prospers, then our spirit prospers. This is called *sanctification*.

***Sanctification: set apart as or declare holy; consecrate; free from sin; purify.*

Galatians 5:16 tells us to walk in the spirit. Many walks in the spirit but don't fully understand what that means. Understanding is the standpoint in which we can walk upright.

The word "Spirit" can be defined as that part of a man related to worship and divine communion with God. It is through the spirit that we have "God-

consciousness" and a relationship with God. It is the means through which spiritual gifts are given and manifested by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10-15). Our spirit is also called the inner man having a still small voice.

There are many attributes to develop our spirit, but our focus is on our faith aspect.

***But, first, let me ask, is there something you are hoping and expecting God to do in 2021?*

**Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*

***What does this verse mean to you?*

Let's Break This Verse Down:

1. Faith is NOW. Faith believes what we ask for is given to us now (in the moment we ask), even when we don't see or feel the results.
2. Faith is the substance hoped for: *Substance: that which really is or exists; equally applicable to matter or spirit.* We see here that the "substance" really does exist in the spirit realm.

**Hope: a desire of some good, accompanied by a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable.*

Hope consists of two things:

1. Wanting a desire—the easy part
2. Waiting—the hard part

Many fails in their faith, even before they get started. We must not allow Satan to rob or steal the promise within your waiting period. If we wait according to the will of God, He will sustain and strengthen us.

Faith is an *"existing substance."* We don't see the *"existing substance"* on earth, but it is already finished in the spiritual realm and established in Heaven. This is why we should pray, *"Your will on earth as it is in Heaven."*

Christians have to confess, take ownership, and call down what we hope from Heaven and speak it into existence. Calling down is an area where Christians fail concerning the faith. We think it is all left up to God. However, if we pray for the will of God, in faith, we are in a partnership with the Godhead. Don't misunderstand me; God can do it on His own, and many times He does, but it is His will for us to assist through spoken faith. If you remember, we learned this from the study on the tabernacle.

3. Faith speaks: Faith is our testimony and a form of communication with God.

There comes a time when we have to stop praying (asking) about it and do something about it—this is called faith (with works) spoken. Applying the blood, declaring, make a decree, a proclamation, calling out, and speaking over the problem. Faith without works is dead (*James 2:17*). Life and death are in words (*Proverbs 18:21*). Words have power, and they create. So, when we speak, we are creating life and power.

**Romans 4:14, " (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." Abraham called things into existence.*

We also see in the book of Matthew that Jesus was speaking things into existence. *Matthew 9:24 "He said unto them, give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. What happened next? They laughed Him to scorn. When we start calling things out as though they were, people will also begin laughing at us due to their lack of faith knowledge. Then following, Jesus sent them out of the room. This is an example that we must not be in company with unbelievers—They hinder the work of God.*

I want to redirect a minute. When Jesus was on earth, He was God, but He was a man living in a human body. Jesus did nothing outside of the voice of His Father. *John 5:19 says, "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."*

Jesus knew His Father, He knew the will of the Father, and Jesus was the Word of the Father. So, Jesus spoke His Word through faith and waited for the direction of God. You see, when we pray the Words of God, it is God's Word coming out of our mouth—He is praying through us. Jesus waited—likewise; we have to wait for the Holy Spirit to assist us.

**Zechariah 4:6, "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, this is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."*

**Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*

4. Faith is disciplined: By correction (*Hebrews 12:6*)— *personal testimony concerning disciplined faith*

Other forms of faith discipline: Love, Study, Pray, Fasting, Worship, Praise, Giving, and Discipleship.

5. Faith is the evidence: How do I know God is going to meet my need? Because the evidence of my faith says so, we always look at the evidence: the truth, the shed blood, the Word, and the Spirit of our faith.
6. Faith judges: No-faith or little faith can keep us where we are, OR our faith can change outcomes. Our "type of" faith determines the results (*Faith without works is dead*) So, this being, the power, and authority are in our hands, except for the timing. The timing is God's.

Discussion

The Spirit of Faith: Part 2

Where Does the Faith Come From?

1. *John 15:26, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"*---The Spirit of the truth is also the Spirit of Faith and Jesus sends Him.
2. *Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Faith is and comes from knowledge.*

The more we hear the Word of God, the more our knowledge of faith prospers and matures. Some examples of hearing: *Read, study, preaching, teaching, prophecy, by song, by meditation, through prayer and intercessory, visions, dreams, and conversation.*

Faith is also intertwined with wisdom; therefore, it respects and honors the Word. *James 1:5-6, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith."*

Let's Look at These Two Words:

***Growth is an increase in size, number, value, or strength.*

***Maturity is the state of being mature, ready, or ripe.*

For me, I don't want to settle for growth. I want to become mature and flourish in faith. Satan continually sets up obstacles in our way to hinder our progress; however, every trial we face can be used constructively as an opportunity to mature our faith. We have to endure the test, so we might as well practice our faith. Our faith in the Word is what pulls down strongholds and defeats the enemy of our soul.

**2 Corinthians 4:13, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak"*

In part one, we learned that faith is spoken, and now we see again in this verse, and again, faith is also a part of the spirit.

**Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him, by the blood of the lamb and by the words of their testimony." The way we overcome is through the shed blood of Jesus, His Word, the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of our faith.*

We learned from the Tabernacle series that the Word represents water—Laver/Basin, bringing the shed blood, water, and Spirit agreeing as One.

**1 John 5:6-9, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. (7) For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (8) And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (9) If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son."*

***In Heaven: The Father, The Word, and the Holy Ghost are One*

***In Earth: The Spirit, the water, and the blood agree in one.*

John calls Jesus "*he who came by water and blood.*" The reference to water and blood has been interpreted in many ways. However, I believe the water refers to His baptism by John the Baptist and the water that came from His side when He was pierced on the cross. The blood refers to the stripes on his back, the crown of thorns pierced in His head, and His overall death sacrifice on the cross.

John also defines three "witnesses," *water, blood, and the Spirit*. He refers to the Spirit as the "truth," and the one who testifies about Jesus as God's Son. At the "water," God the Father spoke from the sky at Jesus' baptism. At the "blood," God said through various actions—including a dark sky during the day, and the temple curtain was torn from top to bottom. With these three witnesses, John's argument that Jesus is the Son of God is settled.

These three witnesses make up the One Godhead, and when Christians join their faith with the Godhead, we act as One with Him and become partners with Christ.

**Hebrews 2:14, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."*

**Hebrews 3:14, "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence {faith} steadfast unto the end." If is conditional; if we hold our faith.*

*** This Greek word "partakers" meaning a "participant," a "sharer," or a "partner."*

The only way we can become One is through the shed blood of Jesus and the Spirit of faith. As we join together, God manifests through His Holy Spirit because His Spirit is the only way God operates. Otherwise, He would be in the natural realm, and this is impossible for God. We often don't see God manifest our need because we pray and operate in the physical realm rather than the spiritual realm. In other words, we aren't connected.

I'm going to say something here that you will scratch your head about because I did too when I heard it. It will sound wrong and misleading, but if we pause and think about it, it will make sense.

We are servants to God. We work for God. Do you agree with that? Now, the Holy Spirit is a servant to us. Let me repeat that: The Holy Spirit serves and intercedes for us. Let me explain: Jesus Christ is the mediator in Heaven; the Holy Spirit is our intercessor on earth. Christ alone died for our sins (*Hebrews 1:1–2*), making reconciliation with God possible (*2 Corinthians 5:19*). However, the Holy Spirit did not die for our iniquities; He prays to the Father on our behalf, based on the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

***Mediator (Jesus): a go-between God and His Spirit on our behalf.*

***Intercessor (Holy Spirit): a person who intervenes on behalf of another, especially by prayer.*

The Holy Spirit serves and works for us by praying and carrying out the will of God. When we speak through faith and, by God's authority, the Spirit of God manifests. However, let me make clear, the Holy Spirit manifests only what He hears from Jesus for the purpose of the cross; thereby, God/Jesus is to receive the glory. God does not share His glory/victory with others (*Isaiah 48:11*). So, the Holy Spirit serves and works for us on behalf of God's glory, only.

**Isaiah 48:11, “For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.”*

**John 16:13-16, (13) “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” (14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. (15) All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you (16) A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.”*

***Serve: perform duties or services for (another person or an organization).*

***Work: an activity involving mental or physical effort done to achieve a purpose or result.*

Note: there are seven Spirits of God. This is another series that I will teach after we conclude this series on faith, but I wanted to show the Holy Spirit acts as a servant and works/manifests in many ways—This is also called the mind of Christ.

1. The Spirit of God:
2. The Spirit of Wisdom:
3. The Spirit of Understanding:
4. The Spirit of Counsel:
5. The Spirit of Might:
6. The Spirit of Knowledge
7. The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

Please understand my teaching; the Holy Spirit is God, and He serves His purpose only. However, He demonstrates His purpose through us as His services help equip us to serve Him more.

Discussion

The Spirit of Faith: Part 3

What Lens Are You Looking Through?

Before our little break with the pandemic, I had a magnifying glass in previous lessons, and I said that we needed to focus. I printed off a magnifying glass on a piece of paper, and we wrote in the middle of the glass the word “*focus*.” We wrote circumstances or people’s names around the word “*focus*” that we wanted God to perform miracles concerning and demonstrating that our eyes should only be on Jesus as He manifests His work. *How many of you still have that hung up and praying over them? Did God answer any of the needs?*

This section of the series is about what lens you are looking through. There are five lenses we will address:

- *Measured faith
- *Doubting faith
- *Little Faith or unbelief
- *Great Faith
- *Strong faith

Faith is Measured:

**Romans 12:3, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."*

We begin with measured faith. A measure of faith is a gift given, by God, to each person at birth. It is a faith that has not grown but sufficient for belief in God to be saved.

Without the measure of faith, we cannot proceed to deeper levels. However, as we mature in Christ, so can our faith. God measures our faith in how much we love, believe, and trust in Him.

Doubting Faith:

You cannot be saved without faith. Everyone who comes to God must come through faith. But, let's look at what the scriptures say about no faith in *John 20:24-29*.

**John 20:24-29, "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, we have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."*

Thomas was known as "*Doubting Thomas*." Thomas had to see Jesus with his own eyes before he would believe. Many Christians today are the same way as Thomas was. Before they believe God will provide a miracle, they will have to see it. Have you ever heard or said the expression, "*I have to see it to believe it?*" I have, but yet this is what we call doubt.

***Doubt: It is a lack of confidence in the Word of God. Doubt is the opposite of faith, and, therefore, it is a sin. For without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).*

We are not perfect Christians and never will be, so there are and will be times when we struggle and doubt may manifest. If doubt is not taken care of immediately, it will become settled and firmly rooted. Doubt has to be repented of and then forgiven, just like any other sin. After repentance, we move and continue to walk in the Spirit of faith.

What lens are you looking through? Are you looking through the lens that sees Jesus only when you can physically see Him at work, like Thomas, OR are you seeing Jesus even when He is not visible?

The ultimate goal of doubt is to prevent us from receiving the inheritance of God. Therefore, doubt is misleading, it often leads to fear, and then fear does not trust God because it is under Satan's control. And, it also causes many people to spend eternity in hell because it is an un-repenting sin. Do you see the destructive pattern that doubt has?

We must always be mindful of *"believing our beliefs and not our doubts."* I think this is one of the keys to faith, and I repeat this phrase a lot when Satan is attacking my mind with doubt.

God has given everyone a choice and a will to believe. There are two sides to belief: We can choose to accept God's Word no matter what we see, hear, or the timing; Or we can take the flip side of God's view, which believes Satan's false imaginations in which we are conceding and handing over our faith.

***Conceded: admit that something is true or valid after first denying or resisting it; admit (defeat) in a contest; surrender or yield (something that one possesses).*

As Christians, we must not concede and hand over our faith and the inheritance that is rightfully ours. We need to get mad at the enemy, and take back what is ours—Refuse to give up. *Mark 5:36 says, "ONLY BELIEVE!"*

Before I go further, I want to ask, *"how many of you feel as though you are having a calling on your life to do a work for God?"* Actually, we all do; It is a call to believe. God is calling for all Christians to stand in the gap and just believe His Word, His will, and ability to perform it. If we feel no other calling upon our life, we can rise to the call of belief.

Let's look at one more reference in *Mark 9:27*. Jesus cast the devil out and healed the boy, and when the disciples were alone with Jesus, they asked Him, *"Why could not we cast him out?"* In other words, *"why didn't the devil come out? we did the same thing you always do."* And Jesus said to them, *"because of your unbelief."* All unbelief is a product of our flesh and what Jesus was saying is that *"you have not maintained the fullness of the Holy Spirit; now you are operating in your own name, in the flesh."* Devils are not subject to the flesh. They are subject to Jesus Christ, the blood, and the Holy Spirit—God Jehovah—His power and His authority, working through us. Then Jesus goes on to say, *"How be it this kind*

cometh forth by nothing but by prayer and by fasting.” Prayer and fasting come through faith—the Spirit of faith.

Faith gets our prayers answered, and doubt, along with unbelief, prolongs the answer or voids them out ultimately.

Discussion

The Spirit of Faith: Part 4

Little Faith Versus Great Faith:

One is mixed with doubt, while the other is free from doubt.

Faith has power—the power to pull down what we are hoping for and bring it to existence. We have spoken about this verse in previous lessons but let's look at *Hebrews 11:1* again to see what the word says faith is: "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*"

For a long period of time, this scripture was on my heart. I could not be released from it. So, I began praying about it and asking God to give me insight. So, this is my translation and how I feel like God instructed me to look at faith: *Faith is the title and deed [stamped in the blood of Jesus] of the things I trust to manifest.*

We can see from both the translations; faith is substance; it is evidence, a certainty, assurance, confidence, a title, a deed, a conformation, and proof. Great faith puts a demand on the Word of God, and it pulls down into existence—it declares and decrees. Great faith settles a matter.

Now, little faith is mixed with doubt. When we doubt, we lack confidence in something or God. Little faith distrust. Little faith considers it unlikely. Little faith leaves room for opinions, and little faith interferes with decision making.

***Can you see the difference between little faith and great faith?*

***But what about the mustard seed; it is small in size?*

**Matthew 17:20, 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 be removed; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. This response came in response to a question from Jesus' disciples. They wanted to know why they could not cast out a demon from a little boy. Jesus told them it was because of their unbelief. Depending on your Bible translation, such as the NIV and Rotherham, unbelief is translated as "little faith."*

You may be asking yourself: So, if a grain of mustard seed is small in size, and we have faith the size of a mustard seed, is that enough? Yes, BUT ONLY IF that faith is pure. Great faith is pure faith. So, even though the mustard seed is small in size, it is excellent, refined, and has power within it. Because little faith is mixed with fear and unbelief, we have to water and feed the seed with God's Word, prayer, and sometimes fasting, so the seed does not dry up and die but instead flourish and thrive.

The seed represents the future and the end of harvest—strong and plenty.

Looking at the mustard seed, it doesn't take a lot of faith to receive any promise from God; it just requires pure devotion and faith from the heart. Satan battles our minds; it is the battlefield in which he loves to entertain and play. At times, we fight our thoughts, and if we have pure functioning faith, we will overcome and win the battle in our minds to receive what we have genuine faith for; therefore, we need to evaluate our hearts. Are we feeding and watering the seed daily, OR are we neglecting it? Depending on our answer, we either have a depleted/defeated mustard seed where faith doubts (we sin) OR a pure and healthy mustard seed that will grow and flourish into a mature, large tree?

**Matthew 6:30, Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

Little faith will question whether God will answer our request. Little faith robs our provision because it doubts the provider. Little faith discounts God's power. Little faith doesn't believe God can move in ways we haven't already seen Him move before. Little faith walks by the five senses (body) and the mind's (soul) vain imaginations; that is why we have to cast down ungodly thoughts and bring them into submission to the Spirit of God.

**Matthew 14:30-31, (30) "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, LORD, save me. (31) And immediately, Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"*

***Notice: Do you see the underlined words: Little faith doubts.*

Peter started in faith but took his eyes off Jesus and placed them on fearful circumstances instead of the ONE who could grab his hand and lift him up and out of it.

Have you ever been in a situation where the storm is raging, the boat is tilting, and you feel like you will fall out and sink OR where the storm is so intense that you can't figure out how God will deliver you from it? I know; I have, and by my experience, I have learned that is part of the problem. God didn't ask us to figure out how He can. He asked us to believe He can—our call to Christ.

So, are your eyes focused upon the storm, and how will God deliver you out, OR are you focused on God and His timing? Now, there are many situations we can trust God in all things except for His schedule. If God takes longer than we think He should, our patience begins to run low or even out; we start to lose trust, then we begin to lose faith. Great faith always trusts God's timing.

Little faith wavers. *James 1:6-8, (6) "But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. (7) That person should not expect to receive anything from the LORD. (8) Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do."*

Little faith is an unstable person with a mind that is out of control, and the verse says, "we should not expect to receive anything from the LORD." Little faith forgets God's salvation of past deliverances. We can always follow in the footsteps of David and avoid doubt by strengthening ourselves in the Lord. But how did he accomplish it? David went before the Lord and prayed, and he remembered God's faithfulness to deliver him from the hands of his enemies. The life of David was a life of prayer. So, when we begin to doubt whether God will come through for us, we can encourage ourselves in the Lord through prayer, and we do it with the Word of God in our mouth—our testimony. Be assured; if we walk with Him and look to Him, and believe to expect help from Him, He will never fail us.

That is one example of how we can transform little faith into great faith: Focus on God's past miracles of our testimony and encourage ourselves in the LORD through prayer. Remember, our testimony is in part of how we overcome (*Revelations 12:11*).

The Spirit of Faith: Part 5

Graduating to Great Faith:

Great faith is an unrelenting persuaded type of faith; that does not give up until the request is granted.

Jesus marvels with great faith. *Matthew 15:21-28*, the Canaanite woman, a Gentile (not a Jew; a foreigner), persisted in getting Jesus' attention. Usually, a Gentile, as a rule, had little faith, if any faith at all. However, her response to Jesus was full of humility, wisdom, and grace that got Jesus' attention.

Jesus said she had great faith. Why? It was pure faith. She never doubted that Jesus could set her demon-possessed daughter free. When Jesus refused her, saying that He had only been sent to the Jews, she persisted. She followed Jesus and cried out even more when it looked as though He was ignoring her, and her daughter wasn't going to receive deliverance. She continued and demonstrated a faith so great that Jesus replied with these words: *“Oh woman, great is thy faith, let it be to you as you will (desire).”* So, we can learn from the Canaanite woman that persistence prevails. Persistence is continually seeking after the Word by calling out, applying the blood, declaring, and making a decree—a fixed position of standing firm.

There were five things we can learn from her story:

1. She was persistent.
2. She put her faith in action.
3. She spoke faith out of her mouth.
4. Her request was granted.
5. Jesus said she had great faith.

Great faith does not hesitate to act on what it believes with the assurance that it shall receive what it is seeking. Great faith causes Jesus to act.

God doesn't take kindly to unbelief, especially when He has come through for us time and time again. The Israelites are a prime example of an evil heart of unbelief.

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

We are to take warning by the disobedient Israelites: they were brought out of the house of bondage, and they had the full promise of a land of prosperity and rest. However, through unbelief and disobedience, they had departed their heart from their Lord; therefore, they lost their rest. What was possible in their case is also possible in ours.

**Hebrew 11:6 says, without faith, it is impossible to please God. Why? According to Hebrews 3:12, when God looks upon a heart that does not believe, then He sees a nature of evil.*

When we (including me) can grasp the vastness of God's love, we will understand, He has done everything in His power to supply our every need. He has given us His only begotten Son. He has given us His shed blood. He has given us His Name. He has given us His Spirit, and He has given us an army of angels. Now, the rest is up to us. All God requires: "only believe—our call to Christ."

**Mark 9:23, Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*

There is always judgment with disobedience. The Israelites that did not believe, died, and did not receive the promise of a land with milk and honey. However, Joshua and Caleb had great faith. They did not accept doubt and unbelief. God had told them years earlier that He would give them the land, and they believed the promise; therefore, they took the promised land in Canaan. Great faith says what God says about a situation. Great faith believes God is not a man that He could lie. Great faith knows God is our victory banner—Jehovah-Nissi. Great faith doesn't fear what it sees with its natural eyes. Great faith inherits the promises.

The point is this: Once we win victory over doubt and unbelief, our faith will begin growing, maturing, and flourishing as we exercise it in Jesus Christ.

We all, at one time or another, have all wondered, "why?" Why do I have to go through this? Why is it taking God so long to manifest His power? Why? Why? Why? We want reasons! It isn't easy sometimes to not understand and know the

reason. However, let me say this: trying to finger out the causes of whether it is God delaying and should I embrace it OR is it Satan waring and I should rebuke him, this kind of thinking opens up a door to Satan to lay a trap. Trust me; I've been there many times.

I heard a message once concerning "*reasons*" and the following verse, and I loved it so much that I wrote it down. I want to share it with you. "*It does not matter whose hand it starts from because even if the storm started from the hand of my enemy, it has to go through the hand of my God before it gets to me. So, no matter who started it, it will serve a purpose for my life.*" Understanding these words takes the burden and pressure off of me to have a reason for it.

When we waste our time and energy trying to figure things out, and we aren't fully applying the great faith God requires. We (including me) need to learn how to live by the truth of God's Word rather than by reasons. When we can fully understand and grasp these two scriptures referenced, then great faith will manifest, and we will have a life of peace—peace comes from an understanding of the Word.

**Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

**Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."*

Submitting our thinking or reasoning isn't easy at times, but it is a matter of devotion to the Father and spiritual willpower/determination. *Philippians 4:13* says, "*we can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us.*"

Ponder this: If it only takes faith the size of a mustard seed to move mountains, then how much doubt does it take to cancel out our faith? Answer the call to ONLY BELIEVE!!

Discussion

The Spirit of Faith: Part 6

Strong Faith:

The Bible does not specifically say “*strong faith*.” However, if we look at the scriptures closely, we can identify them as strong faith. I have underlined the words that bring the two together.

There are four pillars of strong faith: love, trust, obedience, and patience, and they equal one thing: FEAR NOT!

***Love:** *1 John 4:18, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”*

***Trust:** *Psalms 56:4, “In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.”*

***Obedience:** *Luke 1:74, “To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear.”*

***Patience:** *James 1:2-4, “(2) Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (3) because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. (4) Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*

Patience rest on the other three pillars. If we can hold firm on them, then patience can follow without fear. However, we cannot hold them up on our own strength. The strength is the LORDS.

***Psalm 46:1-3, “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; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”**

***Deuteronomy 31:6-8, “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt**

cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” Notice, God tells us twice in this scripture, alone, to fear not.

**Psalms 27:1, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”*

**Joshua 1:9, “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”*

Strong faith is built upon the strength of God. Strong faith always loves, trusts, is obedient, patient, and never fears.

**Jeremiah 20:9, “Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones...”* I believe strong faith will be shut up in our bones like a fire, and the Holy Spirit will not be quenched but will stand firm and fury in our faith.

What lens are you looking through, the lens of fear OR the lens that allows God to strengthen you?

Discussion

Faith, Worship, and Idols: Part 7

In the Bible, God commands us to worship Him and Him alone. In fact, this is the first commandment that His finger inscribed on the tablets of stone. Worship is significantly vital for a Christian because we are in disobedience, which is a sin without out it. It makes me curious to wonder if the people who do not worship are actually Christian at all—only God knows the answer to that, and I will not judge.

However, Jesus says, if we do not worship God, the stones will immediately cry out in our place (*Luke 19:40*). We cannot hear them, but many rocks are crying right now in the spirit realm. God will always get His praise and worship even if we do not give it to Him.

***The meaning of worship is to give worth to.*

There are many different levels and forms of worship, but I am only going to reference two. If you want to discuss other forms of worship, we can do that in our final discussions.

We all know the three Hebrew boys' story, but I want to go deeper and show you what God has shown me; a reality that many never think of and teachers never teach. In fact, it has just been recent that God has given me a revelation. I warn you; this is a harsh lesson to learn, and if you disagree or have concerns about this teaching, pray and ask God to reveal His truth to you. I would never want you to take my word for it just because I said so.

In Daniel chapter 3, King Nebuchadnezzar threw the Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, into the burning fiery Furness when they would not bow to his idol. What was the king commanding them to do? He was commanding worship. However, the Hebrew boys refused to do so. Why? They had a deep love for Jesus with a made-up mind, and through their faith, they were going to be loyal to Him no matter how bad the circumstances and consequences looked. They knew wholeheartedly that Jesus would deliver them, and without doubt, He did. When we come through for Jesus with our faith, He will come through for us with His deliverance.

***Words describing bowing down are magnifying (making larger), have a high opinion of, look up to, and lift up.*

Idols are more than just a golden image. Idols can be a person/friend, a tv program, a sport, and a thought. When Satan brings doubt and fear in our mind, and we entertain the imaginations by neglecting God's truth, what we are doing is giving into, bowing down, and excepting Satan's idol thoughts.

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5," For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God {idol}, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"* Anything we put above God and the truth of His Word is disobedience and an idol—it can even be a thought.

I want to stress; it is not the thoughts of doubt and fear that enter our mind that are a sin because Satan continually puts them there. But it is the thoughts that we entertain to take the place of God's Word that becomes sin.

***Another word for worship is service.*

Doubt and fear belong to Satan; God did not give us the spirit of fear. *2 Timothy 1:7 says. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind/peace."* In other words, the mind of Christ. So, what does that tell us when we bow down to them? We are serving Satan's purpose by having high regard or an opinion of them. If we didn't, we would not be dwelling and excepting them.

This is a difficult teaching, and we are all guilty in some form or fashion, but *John 8:32 says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."* What is he saying? Not any truth, but the truth we know and do will set us free. This is the purpose of why we need to do everything we can to learn God's Word and what He says concerning a matter--we are destroyed by our lack of knowledge (*Hosea 4:6-7*).

Satan makes our situations big, so we will magnify them and make them bigger—this is called worship.

**Matthew 6:24," No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."* We cannot hold on to God and hold on to the enemy's thoughts at the same time. As soon as we recognize our wrong thinking, we need to hold it captive, and cast it down. If necessary, ask for forgiveness. Casting down is a continual process and can be a minute-by-minute process for many, but it is essential to build up and worship God with our faith.

The three Hebrew boys came out of the fire untouched, so ask yourself this question: Does my faith come out of the fire untouched or smelling like smoke?

Jesus cautions in *Matthew 12:34*, "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*". When evil thoughts reside in our minds, it filtrates to our hearts and will be exposed in speech and language contrary to God's truth and love.

Our thoughts are in a pattern of God's order of worship, included in the tabernacle of Moses. You may not understand this part of the lesson for those who were not in the class when we talked about the tabernacle. However, I will do my best to explain it.

In the tabernacle, there is a menorah, candlestick, or lampstand. All three are referenced in the Bible but meaning the same. The candlestick is the fourth piece of furniture and the second in the Holy Place's inner chamber.

The candlestick was to be lit by the priest at all times. It represents the Holy Spirit, Truth, the Vine and branches, the Light of Jesus, and we are to be a candlelit on a hill for all to see. It is also the area where God instructs us to submit our intellect or thinking and put on the mind of Christ.

The words in the Bible do not come out and say thinking is a form of worship, but if we look further into the scriptures' meaning, we will find this to be so. Let's slowly break down the process order: Our thoughts are in the place of our minds. Our minds and heart are attached. Out of our hearts, our mouths speak. Our body is to be a sacrifice of praise. Our minds and hearts are in our bodies. Our thoughts are to be brought to the obedience of Christ. Obedience is a form of worship (learned in the Tabernacle series). Our words either serve God or the devil. Our words are powerful and active. Worship is active praise from our thoughts and

expressed through our hearts by way of our lips. Our thoughts are in the sanctuary of praise—the Holy Place and they are to be submitted to God. That is a mouth full and a lot to process, but the revelation is if our thoughts are displayed in the sanctuary of praise, this alone proves the point. If our imaginations do not line up and in order of the Word of the LORD, then we are worshipping another god.

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5," For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds); Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God {idol}, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"*

Is submitting our thinking over to God difficult? Yes. Are we going to catch ourselves thinking out of the will and order of God? Yes, because Satan is sly, cunning, and out to steal, kill, and destroy. Also, we are not perfect Christians. Just remember, it is the imaginations that we allow to be rooted to take the place of God's Word that becomes an idol of sin. I believe the more we discipline our way of thinking, the easier it will become to overcome.

To end this lesson on a positive note, we can all be thankful that we have a faithful and merciful God who is more than willing to forgive us of our sins.

Discussion