**Faith**

What is faith? First, we must define the word. Undefined words can be a source of confusion. I believe faith is one of the most misunderstood words among believers.

Faith is not wishful thinking. It is not a mystical power. Some think of faith as a force, a mind over matter, whereby the actual fact of believing something has the effect of making it come true. Faith is not shutting your eyes and believing something into being.

It is an attitude of trust toward something or someone which enables that something to function in response. Faith must be placed in something. Faith does not exist in itself; it is an attitude toward an object or someone. In the same way as love. Love does not exist other than an attitude towards someone or towards an object.

It is the object in which we put our faith that determines whether the faith is effective or not. People often say “if only I had more faith” or looked across to someone else and say, “I wish I had his faith”. Many of us have prayed the simple prayer “Lord increase my faith”. I know I have.

This is exactly the request the disciples made to Jesus on one occasion and the response the Lord made surprised them. The story is found in Luke 17:5-6. The apostles said to Jesus “Increase our faith”. The Lord replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey you.” Mustard seed at the time was the smallest seed in the M.E.

So, what did the Lord mean by that? Simply that it is not the size or amount of faith that is needed. Small faith or big faith will produce the same result. I do not believe that the Lord has given much faith to some people and little faith to other people. I believe we all have been given the same amount of faith.

What makes the difference is the one you put your faith into. If I put my faith in a weak chair, not matter how much faith I put in that chair, if I sit on it, I will finish on the floor.

When Peter walked on the water he started to sink, Peter learnt a lesson on that day and Jesus was saying “without me you can do nothing.” No matter how much faith Peter had, it was not his faith that kept him walking on water, it was Jesus’ miraculous power.

Peter said, “command me to come.” God’s power is greater than the wind and the waves. Matthew 8:26-27 + 14:22-33. When Peter realized his helplessness, he cried and called out to Jesus, “Lord, save me!”. Jesus rescued Peter.

No matter how much you believe in something the outcome is in the hand of Him who has the answer to all our questions. Faith is not the belief that God will do what I want but that He will do what is right. When applying faith, we have to know the will of God. Faith is knowing, believing, and trusting Him in all circumstances, in good times and bad times.

Faith is not denying the problem, it is believing that God will answer and that on His own terms. Faith is accepting His answers. Faith is believing. It does not make things happen; God makes the request happen. Faith in God makes you rejoice in His presence, trusting Him for the outcome of any situation. 1 Samuel 17:47 says “the battle is the Lord’s”.

When David fought Goliath, he put his faith in God not in himself. God has never promised us an easy life, a life without problems but he has promised to be with us and to comfort us.

In the Old Testament time God spoke to the Hebrew people through prophets, a small number of people chosen by God. In the New Testament time, and since Pentecost, God speaks to His people through His Holy Spirit who lives in us. He is our comforter and deliverer in all situations, good times, and bad times. The outcome is not always according to our way of thinking. God has a plan for each of our lives.

It says in Isaiah 55:8 “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. 2 Corinthians 4:18 “Keep your eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen.” Abraham waited 14 years for the promise of a son to be fulfilled.

For faith to be active you must first and foremost seek to know the will of God. Faith is a positive response to what God has already done through grace. If grace hasn’t provided it faith can’t. The victory is ours in Jesus’ name. The victory is not always in the physical or in what is seen. In Jesus we can be overcomers and have the victory in the mind. The Lord is my Shepherd. Psalm 23

Ask yourself who is your greatest enemy and try to overcome it. Our greatest enemy is found in the mind, it is ourselves, it is sin, it is the spirit of the world. But God has given us the tools to overcome the enemy. They are found in the Babe of Bethlehem, the Darling of Heaven, the Lord of Glory.

The battle is spiritual, it is in the heavenly places. We cannot overcome the spiritual battle with earthly tools. It is impossible, but with God all things are possible. When the battle rages read Ephesians 6:10-18 The armour of God. Commit to the Lord having done all, keep calm, sit back, relax, close your eyes and trust the one who has overcome death, hell and the grave.

Faith is not what I can do but what God can do for me and through me. Faith is finding and accepting the will of God for our lives. Jesus came first and foremost to those who have no hope, to those no-one else would go and say, “I give you hope, I give you life, I give you eternity.”

Faith is adjusting from the mundane to the spiritual. There is a part in us that was created to worship God and if we do not find God in our lives, we worship other things. We make idols for ourselves; we worship created things rather than The Creator. Idols cannot be removed; they have to be replaced by truth and light.

The human heart searches for satisfaction. It is only in God that the heart can be totally satisfied. The goal of Jesus is not to make us happy, but to make us His. His goal is not to get you what you want but to get you what you need.

Worldly pleasure brings happiness, not Joy. Happiness is superficial, it is found in worldly pleasures, it lasts only for a time. Joy is much deeper; it is found in fellowship with Jesus.

Faith in Jesus brings Peace and Joy into our lives. Happiness comes and goes. Joy is anchored into our souls, it is the assurance that all is well.

Faith in God is putting His will before our will. Faith in God does not come overnight, it comes over time by praying, reading the Word, having fellowship with Jesus, and getting to know Him.

It is by faith that we become sons of Abraham and are adopted into the citizenship of Israel, into the family of God. It is by faith we are saved and receive the free gift of salvation. Without faith no one will see God. Faith is a gift from God, so no one can boost into anything except in the finished work of Calvary. Philippians 3 tells us we stand justified before God not in our own righteousness that comes from the law but in the righteousness that is from God and that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” Trusting Jesus does not mean that we are going to have a trouble-free life, a perfect life without problems. Often the very opposite is true. It was certainly true in my life when I became a believer.

Do not be afraid or discouraged by mistakes or failures, on the contrary use them as lessons of learning and opportunities to grow. Remember we are all on a journey. It has been said the Christian walk is not a sprint, it is a marathon.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul boasted about his weaknesses. At times the Lord allows painful circumstances into our lives in order to bring us back to him, back on course, back into the family of God. Those circumstances can be very unpleasant at times, even painful. John 16:33 prepares us when it says “In this world you will have trouble, but take heed I have overcome the world.”

Hope is on the way in Romans 8:18 when it says “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the Glory that will be revealed in us.” We may not be healed on earth, but we will be in heaven, when we see Him we shall be like Him. We shall have a new body, free from weakness, pain, disease, no more sorrow, no more tears, no more death, only Joy, Peace and Light in the presence of Almighty God.

Glory to His Wonderful Name!