

Eternity Daily Bible Study

(A ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Walking In The Spirit - 9

Topic: What Is Faith?

Date: 30th July 2009

In the last couple of studies we have talked about the spiritual realities that surround us. About how God's plan is to reconnect earth and heaven so His will is done on earth as it is in Heaven and how that plan is opposed by the 'kosmos' - the present world rulers of darkness from which the Christian must be separate.

Now the key act in connecting heaven and earth is living faith. Faith is the creature reconnecting with the Creator. Faith is believing in the goodness of the One who made us and is His power and in His capacity to act on our behalf, even in the midst of this fallen world.

Faith is the intuitive spiritual apprehension of God, His nature, His power and His works. Faith understands that there is an invisible realm behind all things, that God rules over it as a real and actual Creator and that this God is not an impersonal force of fate but rather a God who loves and rewards those who seek after Him.

Hebrews 11:1-6 HCSB *Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. (2) For by it our ancestors were approved. (3) By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen has been made from things that are not visible. (4) By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By this he was approved as a righteous man, because God approved his gifts, and even though he is dead, he still speaks through this. (5) By faith, Enoch was taken away so that he did not experience death, and he was not to be found because God took him away. For prior to his transformation he was approved, having pleased God. (6) Now without faith it is impossible to please God, for the one who draws near to Him must believe that He exists and rewards those who seek Him.*

The ancients did not have the religious structures we have today, or even the Bible we have today, but they believed God. They connected with Him and followed Him and gained His approval through their faith. By their faith they glimpsed the heavenly realms and by their faith they became people who did God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven. The ancients had this deep intuitive spiritual apprehension of God, His nature, His power and His works that I spoke of earlier.

Faith is not just about Scripture memory, external righteousness or obedience to rules – the Pharisees had that but they did not believe when Jesus came. Nor is it about right ceremony – the high priests and the Sadducees had that yet they failed to understand the Scriptures or the power of God (Matthew 22:29). Nor is it about having a deep knowledge of doctrine. Nicodemus was a teacher of all Israel yet Jesus told Nicodemus that he still needed to be born-again.

Faith is what the Samaritan woman at the well had (John chapter 4) when she simply believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Her life was a moral mess, her doctrine at that

point was mainly wrong (Jesus told her 'you do not know what you worship') , and she had probably never been to the Jewish temple. But she believed in Jesus and was saved. As Jesus gently revealed her past the Samaritan woman simply knew that Jesus was the long-promised Messiah. Again we find faith existing as an intuitive spiritual apprehension of God, His nature, His power and His works.

When people have faith they latch onto God and they connect or reconnect with Heaven. As a result of moving into alignment with God and with Heaven they move out of alignment with the earthly, demonic powers of the kosmos mentioned yesterday. Two passages from Hebrews 11 illustrate this principle:

Hebrews 11:7-10 HCSB *By faith Noah, after being warned about what was not yet seen, in reverence built an ark to deliver his family. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (8) By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went out to a place he was going to receive as an inheritance; he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

Hebrews 11:23-27 HCSB *By faith Moses, after he was born, was hidden by his parents for three months, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they didn't fear the king's edict. (24) By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (25) and chose to suffer with the people of God rather than to enjoy the short-lived pleasure of sin. (26) For he considered reproach for the sake of the Messiah to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, since his attention was on the reward. (27) By faith he left Egypt behind, not being afraid of the king's anger, for he persevered, as one who sees Him who is invisible.*

Faith is not a creed, it is a dynamic spiritual principle of personal relationship to our Abba Father God who loves us! Faith looks beyond this world and into the next:

2 Corinthians 5:7 HCSB *for we walk by faith, not by sight--*

2 Corinthians 4:18 HCSB *So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen; for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

As we exercise the spiritual intuition of faith and believe in God and in His promises then unusual things start to happen. Creeds do not produce miracles - but true faith does.

Hebrews 11:32-34 HCSB *And what more can I say? Time is too short for me to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, (33) who by faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched the raging of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength after being weak, became mighty in battle, and put foreign armies to flight.*

Indeed Jesus constantly encouraged His disciples to have this kind of world-transforming faith:

Mark 11:21-24 HCSB *Then Peter remembered and said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that You cursed is withered." (22) Jesus replied to them, "Have faith in God. (23) I assure you: If anyone says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. (24) Therefore, I tell you, all the things you pray and ask for--believe that you have received them, and you will have them.*

Now, going back to the start, the purpose of such world-transforming faith is for God's Kingdom to come and for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Within that framework, within the Grand Cause of a world infused with God's glory, you can move mountains by faith alone. Because when you believe then God's character, power and goodness is brought into the picture. If you do not believe all you are left with is human strength and the powers of darkness.

Blessings,

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