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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* Acts 16:31a And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* Romans 10:9,10 *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Romans 10:13 *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

We Walk By Faith

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

Outline By Subject And Verse:

- A. Little Faith. Matthew 6:30
- B. Great Faith. Matthew 8:10
- C. According To Faith. Matthew 9:29
- D. Seed Of Faith. Matthew 17:20
- E. No Doubts. Matthew 21:21
- F. No Faith. Mark 4:40
- G. Where is the faith? Luke 8:25
- H. Increasing our faith. Luke 17:5
- I. Faith holding up in extreme trials. Luke 22:31,32
- J. Full of Faith. Acts 11:24
- K. Purifying the hearts. Acts 15:9
- L. From faith to faith. Romans 1:17
- M. Living by faith. Romans 1:17; Habakkuk 2:4; Hebrews 10:38
- N. Justified by faith. Romans 5:1
- O. Faith is counted as righteousness. Romans 4:5
- P. Steps of faith. Romans 4:12
- Q. Strengthened by faith. Romans 4:20
- R. Access to the grace of God. Romans 5:2
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- T. Given to every believer. Romans 12:3
- U. Our acts must be motivated by faith. Romans 14:23
- V. Standing fast in the faith. 1 Corinthians 16:13
- W. Walking By faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7
- X. The faith of Christ. Galatians 2:16
- Y. Blessed by faith. Galatians 3:9
- Z. The Messiah will live by faith. Hebrews 10:38
- AA. Faith inspired by agape. Galatians 5:6
- BB. Faith shields us. Ephesians 6:16
- CC. Faith has activity. 1 Thessalonians 1:3
- DD. Faith can and is to grow. 2 Thessalonians 1:3
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- II. Without faith, impossible to please God. Hebrews 11:6
- JJ. Faith empowered Sarah. Hebrews 11:11
- KK. Rich in faith. James 2:5
- LL. Faith has activity. James 2:14,17,18,20,22,26
- MM. The prayer of faith. James 5:15
- NN. Resisting Satan by faith. Ephesians 6:16; 1 Peter 5:9
- OO. Faith is the main actor in the drama of our life. 2 Peter 1:1,5

PP. Equal Privilege. 2 Peter 1:1
QQ. Faith overcomes the world. 1 John 5:4,5
RR. We must stand by faith. Isaiah 7:9b NIV
SS. Do we have faith? Matthew 21:21
TT. Believing and praying. Matthew 21:22
UU. Only believe. Mark 5:36
VV. All things are possible. Mark 9:23
WW. Christ's sheep believe him. John 10:26
XX. Faith In Accepting The Present. Philippians 3:13
YY. Avoiding despair by faith. Psalms 27:13 KJV Psalms 27:13 NASB
ZZ. Activating hope by faith. Romans 15:13
AAA. Salvation comes by faith in Christ. 1 Peter 1:9
BBB. We have everlasting life. John 6:47
CCC. We will never perish. John 3:15
DDD. No condemnation to those in Christ. John 3:18
EEE. God wants us to know we have eternal life. 1 John 5:13

Intro:

There are three different means by which we can perceive reality: empiricism, rationalism and pisticism, or by faith. Empiricism and rationalism are the foundation of western thought, science and life. Children are trained in these two modes of perception from their early days onward. But they are not trained in the utilization of faith. In fact, it is often ridiculed.

Empiricism is where one or more of the five senses: sight, sound, taste, smell, touch, are used to perceive what is true, what is real, what is factual in the outside world. We see with the eyes, we hear with the ears, we taste with our mouths, we smell with our noses and we touch through the skin.

Rationalism is where the mind is employed, by using principles of reasoning, to arrive at the truth of something. For example the distance between the town you are in, town A, and the town you want to go to, town B, is 30 miles. The third town you want to drive to, town C, which is at a right angle from town B, is 40 miles from town B. But you do not know how long it is from where you are at in town A. So you wonder how far would it be to drive directly from town A to town C?

Under **empiricism** you could drive your car directly to town C and find out that it would be 50 miles! But under rationalism, and by employing Pythagorean's Theorem, A squared plus B squared equals C squared, you would be able to deduct that the distance in a direct route between A and C would be 50 miles, thus saving you time and gas.

But under **pisticism** you could ask a person how far it was to town C, whereupon he would tell you that it was 50 miles, and by faith you would believe him and start driving. The point is that empiricism and rationalism are not the only bonafide means of perceiving reality. The issue under pisticism is that the source has to be reliable and for Christians our reliable source is the Word of God found in the Bible!

Now when we look at faith there are two aspects to it. There is the **subjective** concept of faith where we are exercising faith, or believing, and there is the **objective** concept of faith, that is, the object of our faith, or what we are placing our faith in. Both are needed. We are to place our faith in God and his

Word, but not in people. *“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.”* Jeremiah 17:5

There is also an active sense in faith and a passive. **Active** faith is where we believe something that God has said, or promised, and we act upon it. Hebrews 11, and so much of the Bible demonstrates active faith. But there are also times, when we will not be able to act on our faith, but will have to exercise **passive** faith for God to come through for us. This use of faith is defined by such words as: to endure, to persevere, to wait, to wait patiently, etc., and is also found throughout the Bible.

The recurring theme throughout the Bible is that God's people are to live by faith! Even our Savior, the son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, lived by faith when he was here on earth. *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”* Hebrews 12:2

A. Little Faith.

*“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of **little faith**?”* Matthew 6:30 *“And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of **little faith**? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.”* Matthew 8:26 *“And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of **little faith**, wherefore didst thou doubt?”* Matthew 14:31 *“Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of **little faith**, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?”* Matthew 16:8

The word *oligopistos* for **little faith** is used in all four of these passages and could be a tender rebuke for anxiety, but it does mean to have a little faith. Now what this is telling us is that they do have faith, but a little faith. But the encouraging thing is that one, **they have faith** and two, **faith can grow**. It starts out as a small seed and can, and is to grow, into a mature plant. Or as a delicate strand of twine, but by adding more and more faith to it, it can grow into an unbreakable rope!

Each one of these passages deals with trusting God in a particular situation. Matthew 6:30 deals with **trusting in our heavenly Father to provide our daily necessities**: food, water, shelter and so on. The second one in Matthew 8:26 deals with **trusting the Father to protect us in the trials and crises of life**. The third one in Matthew 14:31 deals with **getting our eyes off the Lord**, while we are living the faith rest life, and onto the turmoil of this life. And the fourth one in Matthew 16:8 deals with our **feeling responsible to provide for things pertaining to Christ's ministry**.

If we're to live by faith in this life, then we are going to have to learn to trust the Father to provide for us and protect us in this life. We are to look to God for these things, and everything else, not the government, not corporations and certainly not other people.

B. Great Faith.

*“When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so **great faith**, no, not in Israel.”* Matthew 8:10 *“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, **great is thy faith**: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”* Matthew 15:28

In Matthew 8:10 we have the story of a Roman centurion, who had a servant who was grievously ill. The centurion asked the Lord to heal him, to which the Lord replied that he would go there and heal the man. But the centurion replied that it wouldn't be necessary for him to go there in person, (for he felt unworthy to have the Lord in his house), all he had to do was speak the word from there and he would be healed. Then he went on to explain how he was a man under authority and had men under him in authority and all he had to do was tell them what to do and they would do it!

When the Lord heard this, he was amazed and said that he had not seen faith this great in all of Israel! The word used here for **great** was *tosoutos* and it emphasized the idea of strength, unwaveringness, of absolute confidence. The thought would have never occurred in the centurion's mind that his words would not be carried out, and so he believed the same way with the Lord. This also gives us another insight into faith and that is one of authority. If someone says he's going to do something, then you have the absolute confidence that he is going to do what he said he would do.

In Matthew 15:28 we have the story of the Canaanite woman, who had a daughter who was demonized by a devil causing her major torment. She went to the Lord to have him deal with the demon and heal her daughter. The disciples wanted the Lord to send her away, but the Lord decided to talk to her about the situation. He told her that he had been sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and that it wasn't good to take bread away from one's children to give it to the dogs. To which she replied that she was only asking for the scraps left over which the dogs usually got.

Now when the Lord heard this he said that she had great faith. And the word used for **great** is *meGas*, which in this case, brings out the idea of **intensity!** **The intensity of this woman's faith is brought out in her persistence with the Lord in asking him for her daughter's healing. And the intensity of her faith existed because of the intensity of the situation of her daughter's suffering!**

C. According To Faith.

*“Then touched he their eyes, saying, **According to your faith** be it unto you.” Matthew 9:29*

We have the story here of the two blind men who asked the Lord to have mercy on them. Now the idea of mercy is one where God sees the suffering of an individual, regardless of whether it was caused by their own bad decisions or not, and moves to alleviate their suffering. This also presupposes that the petitioners believed that the one they are petitioning is in the position to do something about it.

The Lord asked them if they believed that he was able to do this? Or, if they believed that he had the power, *dunamai*, to do this? To which they replied, yes! Then he said that according, *kata*, to their faith it would be done. The preposition kata is used to denote the criterion by which an action is performed. Which tells us that **the criterion upon which Christ healed them was their faith in him**. This goes back to the concept of grace versus human works. If we want God to do something for us, then it must be based upon his grace. Otherwise, it has to be based upon his justice. So these men wanted Christ to be merciful to them, and this mercy proceeds out of his grace, and for him to do it the criterion had to be faith in him.

The reason why faith is so important is that faith is the only non-meritorious concept from man that God will accept. **The merit of faith lies in the object of faith, not in the one exercising faith**. If there is anything we want God to do for us in our lives, it has to be based upon the standard of faith.

The first and most important area in this matter of God doing something for man is in the matter of salvation, the forgiveness of personal sins and eternal life. Man comes to God to ask for forgiveness, to

save him and give him eternal life. So now man is asking God to do something for him. For God to do something for him, it cannot be based upon man's works, or personal righteousness, for this would be doing something based upon man's works.

So what is the **criterion**, the standard by which God will forgive him, etc.? It has to be according to the standard, or basis, of **faith**. But in this matter it is **faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior**. We approach the throne of God, which is the throne of grace, to ask him for favor. Not demand him to do something for us based upon who we are, or what we have done, but based upon his grace and mercy.

That's what we have here with these two blind men. They had no rights before Christ, no demands, no expectations, nothing that they deserved from him. They only appealed to his grace and mercy and they believed that he could do it. So, based upon their faith in him, his authority and his power to heal them, according to that criterion of faith – Christ healed them!

D. Seed Of Faith.

*“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.**” Matthew 17:20*

In this passage we have the case of a man, who had a son apparently suffering from some sort of mental illness, which they would refer to those in those days having mental problems as being “moon-struck”, and is translated by the KJV as **lunatic**.

He knew that the Lord and his disciples were healing people, so he brought his son to the disciples for them to **cure** him of his mental illness, *therapeuo*, but they were not able to. They had correctly identified the boy's problem as something resulting from the presence of a demon in his life, but they were unable to cast the demon out. So he then took his boy to the Lord himself, whereupon the Lord cured him, but **he cured him by casting a demon out of the boy!**

Later on, after it was all over with, the disciples came to the Lord and asked him **why** they couldn't cast it out? Or why didn't **they** have the **power** to cast it out? To which the Lord replied, after rebuking them, with a simple answer and it was because of their **unbelief!**

He then goes on to talk about the power of faith, rather that is, **the power that is available through the exercising of faith**. He then uses the example of a mustard seed, a very small grain, and that if they had even just a little faith as small as a mustard seed, it would have been enough to get the job done. In fact, it would be enough to tell a mountain to move and it would move. In fact, if we had faith, even that small, **nothing would be impossible for us!**

He did go on to say that this particular species, or type, of demon will not come out without much prayer and fasting. That is to say, that there has to be the sufficient spiritual preparation to get one's faith up to the place where you can deal with this more difficult type. They had cast out demons before, so they probably felt that this would be just a routine thing. But they had not encountered this type of demon before, a much stronger and more entrenched demon, and their level of faith and preparation that they had up to this point was not at a level sufficient enough to deal with this kind.

Which also tells us that in our spiritual walk with the Lord, we may handle day to day problems in our faith walk with God as we go through life. But there will be new territory, new problems, new spiritual battles that we get into where the level of faith, strength, knowledge and confidence that we may have had before, and gave us the victories before, will not do it now. So we will have to get our faith up to the necessary new level, through prayer and absorbing ourselves in the Word of God.

As an aside, there is an interesting concept brought out in Matthew 17:21, where it says, “*Howbeit this kind **goeth not out** but by prayer and fasting.*” The word used there is *ekporeuomai*, which means to go

out and continue on its journey. Demons wander around on the earth; some believe that demons are the disembodied souls of the *Nephilim* who died in the flood, others believe that demons are fallen celestial beings existing on the earth.

Either way, they are disembodied spirits, who are constantly seeking new bodies to possess. When they possess, indwell, human bodies, they remain in them until their host body dies, or until they are cast out, as we see here with the Lord. While they live in these bodies they cause tremendous destruction to their souls and physical way of life. (There is also a difference between demon possession and demon influence). It is while they are between bodies they are constantly **wandering** about seeking a new body to possess. (Satan, put as the lord of the flies, wanders about on the earth). So what we have here is that the demon indwelling this boy was cast out by the Lord and now he **will continue his journey of wandering here on earth**, until he finds someone new to possess!

E. No Doubts.

*“Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, **and doubt not**, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.”* Matthew 21:21 - αποκριθεις δε ο ιησους ειπεν αυτοις αμην λεγω υμιν εαν εχητε πιστιν και μη διακριθητε ου μονον το της συκης ποιησετε αλλα και τω ορει τουτω ειπητε αρθητι και βληθητι εις την θαλασσαν γενησεται

When the Lord had cursed the fig tree, and they all came back by it the next day, the disciples were amazed at what had happened, that it had withered so quickly. So they asked the Lord, *“**How soon is the fig tree withered away!**”* Matthew 21:20 The word *pos* is an interrogative particle which asks the question of **how**, or in what manner did something take place. They saw that the fig tree was withered, but they wanted to know **how** it happened! And with the use of the word, *parachrema*, they wanted to know how it happened **so quickly**. *Parachrema* meant immediately, at once, or so quickly.

Apparently the disciples were more interested in the physical phenomenon of the tree withering than they were in the spiritual lesson about the spiritually dead nation of Israel and how it was being cursed by God, or the spiritual dynamics of faith and the power that comes alongside the exercise of faith.

But the Lord answers their question of **how** it happened in verse twenty one. The passage begins with the word *apokrinomai*, which meant to answer a question, or to reply to someone's statement, and then he goes into the mechanics of this destructive miracle, the only one recorded in the NT, and tells them that **it was accomplished by the exercise of his faith**. And he also tells them that **they too can do such things, if only they believe**.

He begins his statement with the phrase, *“Verily I say unto you”*, or, *“I tell you the truth”* *amen lego humin*. *Amen lego humin* was a solemn introductory formula used at the beginning of a statement to alert the listener that what he was going to hear was of the utmost importance, that they needed to listen to it, understand it and do what it says!

Here the Lord is giving the disciples the secret for accomplishing these mighty works of power, (which actually come from God), but it is a two fold condition: **one**, there must be faith, and **two**, there can be no doubting. Both conditions have to be present. What we are looking at here is the secret of the universe: a faith idea, truth, grace and the power of God.

He then says, *“If ye have faith”*, *ean exhete pistin*. *Echete* is the present active subjunctive of the verb *echo*, which means to have or to possess something. So what he's saying is, **if** you have or possess faith. But when we have *ean* used with the subjunctive mood of the verb it brings out a third class condition

of if, where the condition for something to be fulfilled is **first** stated, and **then** if the condition is there its fulfillment will come to be.

For example, 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins, (maybe we will and maybe we won't), (but if we do, then), he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Which tells us that the condition that God sets for him forgiving our sins and cleansing us is based upon our confessing or acknowledging our sins to him.

But the other part of the condition in addition to faith is, **and doubt not**, *kai me diakrithete*. *Diakrithete* is the aoist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*, the word for wavering back and forth between two positions. The subjunctive mood is also used with this verb, along with the connective use of kai, which tells us that these two ideas are connected together in the condition.

Which tells us that **we must be exercising our faith**, active voice revealing the activity of the will in all this, and at the same time **not be doubting**. *Diakrino*, to **doubt**, meant to waver back and forth between two positions or opinions, which mean to be believing that God will do something, then go back to not believing that he will. It's to go back and forth between the positions of faith and unbelief. Maybe he will, maybe he won't. Will he? Won't he? Yes? No?

To **believe** is used here in the active voice, which shows the activity of the believer's will is involved in choosing to believe. But to **doubt** is found in the passive voice indicating that there is something in all of us, our fallen flesh natures, that acts upon the believer in such a way that causes him to doubt, that causes him to go back and forth between faith and unbelief.

Mark's statement on the mountain emphasizes the idea of prayer. Whenever there is something that the believer wants, then it is expressed to God in prayer. So **Mark's faith is a faith that believes and prays**. “*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. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye **pray, believe** that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*” Mark 11:23,24

Prayer is the vehicle by which one's will is expressed and directed toward God; God's almighty **power** is its source and assurance; **faith** is the opening through which his power works; and God's **sovereignty** is its only restriction. Christ tells the disciples that if they have faith, they will be able to not only do what he did, but even more, “*ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain*”. And we notice the word *ye*, or *you*. It's not just that **he** did it, but by the inclusion of the word **you**, he's telling them that **they** can do it! If they have faith. **They**, if **they** have faith, could say to the mountain, “*Be thou removed and be thrown into the sea*”, then it would do that!

The first command in Mark is *arhethi*, the aoist passive imperative of *airo*. The second command is *bletheti*, the aoist passive imperative of *ballo*. We notice that both words have the same grammatical construction; they are both aoist passive imperatives, which tells us that two commands are directed toward the mountain, to be **removed**, (from its place), and be **thrown...where?...into the sea**.

The passive voice tells us something else. If they were in the active voice, it would tell us that the mountain had volition, which it doesn't. There is no *animus*, no soul life in a mountain, so it is incapable of volitionally obeying a command. But because it is in the passive voice, it tells us that the mountain has been the recipient of a command and will be the recipient of the action.

Which is to say that the mountain will be removed and be thrown, passive voice, into the sea. It will receive the action of the commands. But there will be something else, or I should say, someone else who will be the causative agent behind all this and that is the power of God the Father.

The question and issue for all of us is, 'Do you believe this?' Not just do you believe that Christ could do this? But do you believe that any believer in Christ could do this? I think the resounding answer from most, if not all, believers is, No! Even the yes' would have a loud no behind them. So was this just idle chit chat? Was he describing a hypothetical situation that could never exist? Then why did Christ take the time to talk about it? **And then why did he use the second person plural and tell them that they could do this, if they had the faith?**

Mark 11:23 adds, “*and shall not doubt in his heart*”, *kai me diakrithe en te kardia autou*, the aorist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*. This is the second part of the two-fold condition for getting God to answer our prayers. One, we must be believing, and two, we must not be doubting.

In the heart is the dative case of *en te kardia*, telling us where the location of doubting comes from, the heart. Included also is the causative sense, which is to say, that **it is our hearts that cause us to doubt**. Our minds may believe something to be true, but **it is our hearts that cause us to doubt**. **It's the things going on in our heart that influence us away from the position of truth and faith.**

The Lord talks about the heart in Matthew 15:19, “*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*”, and Mark 7:21, “*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*”. Quite a list of negative dynamics going on in the heart and all of them detract from faith.

Matthew has *dialogismoï poneroi* for **evil thoughts**, tending toward the idea of sexually impure thoughts, carnality, etc.. While Mark has *dialogismoï hoi kakoi*, tending toward the idea of evil reasonings, or the process of human rationalism devoid of faith, which has the idea of worldly viewpoint, the thinking of the world and its people, thinking based upon emotions, assumptions, etc..

It is this process of rationalism that we have to be on guard for in the life of faith. The mind reasons that it can't be done. The reasoning process of the world's people says it can't be done. And this is where doubt enters into our minds. We must believe God when he says **it can be done!** This is exactly what Proverbs 3:5 is about, “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*” Trust in the Lord and stop leaning on our ability to reason things out with our minds!

Doubting is not unbelief. It is the wavering back and forth, the going back and forth between the two positions of belief and unbelief. This is exactly what Elijah was describing in 1 Kings 18:21, “*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long **halt ye between two opinions?** if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*” If Yahweh is God, then follow him. But if *Baal* is God, then follow him! If you think that Satan, or the people of the world, or your own thinking is true, then believe it! **But if you think that Christ's words are the truth, then believe them and act on them!**

The heart tends toward unbelief because of its reasonings and doubts, so it acts upon the believer in such a way that it creates an opposing viewpoint to faith. The writer of Hebrews told us about the problem of the unbelieving heart in Hebrews 3:12, “*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief**, in departing from the living God.*”

The Apostle James told us to purify our hearts, James 4:8, “*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*” To **purify**, *katharizo*, was to cleanse something from dirt or evil. It had the idea that something was new or clean, but became dirty, so the dirt, the unbelief, needed to be removed from it.

James addressed this very problem in our prayers to God where we are to believe while we are praying and not be wavering back and forth between faith and unbelief. He said that the believer who does this is a **double minded** believer, *dipsichos*, literally a double souled believer and is unstable in all he does. “*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. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*” James 1:6-8

F. No Faith.

“*And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have **no faith**?*” Mark 4:40

This is where the Lord was out on the boat with his disciples and a ferocious storm whipped up to the place where the waves were going over the side and swamping the boat. The disciples, being fearful, woke him up to do something about it, upon which he asked why were they so fearful?

Now the word for **fearful** here is *deilos*, which actually referred to that part of the fear complex that dealt with timidity and cowardice. These are concepts where the person is governed by fear, lacking courage, and when faced with a dangerous situation will tend to shy away from it, the idea of **timidity**, or run away from it altogether, the idea of **cowardice**.

In battle all soldiers are afraid; it's normal to have fear. But bravery is where one forges ahead despite their fears, while cowardice will propel the individual away from the fight. Timidity could be used in a lesser sense where the individual tends to shy away from certain uncomfortable concepts. Lack of self assurance and confidence are also found in the mix.

The disciples should have had the same confidence that the Lord did in the storm and forged ahead by faith. Faith that they were safe in the hands of God and his son, who was riding in the same boat with them. The lesson for us is that we will go through many storms in our lives and perhaps we should not be afraid of the storm, with its wind and waves, but enjoy the ride! Why be so timid? Why tend to shy away from things that scare us? We need to muster up our faith and go for it. And we see, once again, that lack of faith in the Lord and his Word opens the door for fear to rush into our souls. It is through faith in Bible Doctrine that we are able to shield our souls from stress, which will lead to fear, timidity and cowardice, all arising out of the resident sin nature in the flesh.

G. Where is the faith?

“*And he said unto them, **Where is your faith**? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.*” Luke 8:25

We notice that Mark's account has it as, “Where is your faith?”. They have faith, but they aren't using it. And this is the point that all believers in Christ need to be aware of. When we believed on Christ as our Savior, God gave us the faith to believe on Christ. “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 God has dealt to each one of us a measure of faith. “*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**.*” Romans 12:3

This faith that we have been given is to grow and get to the place where it is completed. And it is through the trials of life that we go through that provide the opportunities we need for our faith to grow. It is in this situation the Lord was saying to the men, you have the faith, but you're not exercising it.

The one thing we note in the different accounts of believers exercising their faith in the Lord is their total inability to do anything about what they were facing. Whether it was healing a blind man, moving mountains, having power over demons, or calming a storm, these are things that none of us can do – but the Lord can! We think it's impossible, because we can't do it, but it's not impossible to him. And all things are possible to him who believes.

H. Increasing our faith.

*“And the apostles said unto the Lord, **Increase our faith.**” Luke 17:5*

I think we might be surprised about what things the disciples believed about the Lord, at least at the beginning. Even we ourselves today, what did we believe about the Lord when we got saved? We believed he was the Son of God that he was sinless, that he came to earth from heaven, he died for our sins, that he was raised from the dead and if we believe on him we will have our sins forgiven. Perhaps a few more concepts, or perhaps a little less. In fact, salvation will come to those **who just believe on the name of 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*

The disciples did believe that Jesus was the Messiah. But it wasn't until later on that the disciples believed that Christ knew all things and that he had come from the Father. *“I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, **Do ye now believe?**” John 16:28-31 He said, “Do you **now** believe?”*

Thomas didn't believe that the Lord had been raised from the dead. *“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.” John 20:25*

Peter didn't believe that the Lord would have to suffer the things that he was going to go through. In fact, he rebuked the Lord for even saying that. *“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.” Matthew 16:21,22*

And all the disciples were amazed that even the wind and waves obeyed him! *“And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” Mark 4:41 “And he said unto them, **Where is your faith?** And they being afraid **wondered**, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.” Luke 8:25*

When one asks a question like this, and the fact that they were totally amazed that even nature itself obeyed him, tells us that they didn't know who he really was and that he had that kind of power. Their

faith, and their knowledge of who the Lord really was and the powers he possessed were incomplete. They knew he was the Messiah, but their faith in him and their knowledge of him and what he could do was constantly growing. And we see this expressed in their request of increasing their faith.

And so it is with us today. We believe that Jesus is the son of God and that he saves sinners, even to them who just believe on his name. But our faith in him, our knowledge of him, who he really is, what he can actually do, the power that he has at his disposal is to be constantly growing and it will as we spend our lives in prayer, in the doctrinal study of his Word, in personal growth, in meditation on his Word and in living the faith rest life in the promises of God. And as our knowledge of him grows, so will our faith.

I. Faith holding up in extreme trials.

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Luke 22:31,32

The word for desired here is *exaiteomai* and it actually means to demand. *To have* is not in the original, so its Satan has demanded you. But the word for **you** here is *humas*, the accusative plural of **you**, *su*, so it's actually, *“Simon, Simon, pay attention now, Satan has demanded all of you to sift as wheat”*.

Now it may seem strange, even unbiblical, that Satan could demand anything from God. But the word *exaiteomai*, like its English translation, **demand**, means to lay formal legal claim to. It's a legal formal demand one uses before a judge in court stating that they have a claim to something, where a demand is made for something as due, an assertion of a right or an alleged right, a just title to something.

Now if children from parents living in slavery were found off the plantation, and the slaveholder made a demand on them, but the children at the same time also made a claim that they were free, or that they belonged to another man, then they would be taken to court where a judge would determine the case.

So on what basis would Satan come before God's court demanding that he has a claim to the disciples? Remember, that when Adam and Eve sinned against God, Satan became the absolute despot over the world as its ruler and everyone born from the original couple are all under his ownership, much like slaves, who have children while they are in slavery, their children are all property of the slave owner.

Now Satan had no part in Christ whatsoever. Christ did not belong to him; he was not born in sin, he was not a part of Satan's slave system; he was not a part of anything pertaining to Satan. The claim that the disciples, and all other Christians have is that we belong to Christ! That is, we are legally identified, en Christo, with Christ! And because we belong to Christ, we are now free from Satan, his system and any other thing connected to him. So the issue now becomes, do they really belong to Christ! And a trial is set in place to determine that. But not just any trial, but to go through something so difficult that it's designed to **sift you as wheat**, that is, to find out what's really going on inside.

In verse 31 the Lord is telling Peter that Satan has demanded to sift all the disciples, but in verse 32 the Lord switches over to the dative singular of *su*, *sou*, telling us that he's directing what he has to say next at Peter himself, but I have prayed for **you**, Peter, *sou*, dative of reference, then he goes on to explain in reference to what – Peter's faith! That *“the faith of **you**”*, *sou*, the genitive singular of *su*, **your faith**.

The Lord isn't praying that Satan goes away. What he does pray for is that Peter's faith will not fail,

cease, come to an end that he won't give up. What this tells us is that in this life problems will not go away, neither will Satan's demonic attacks against us. But what the Lord has left us with is faith! And what it also teaches us is that our faith in the Lord and his Word is sufficient enough to carry us through any trial, regardless of how bad it is, and to carry us through any Satanic attack against us!

It is our faith in Christ, the Father and his Word, that will enable us to stand up against any and all attacks against our souls and bodies and prevail over them in victory. We have the faith; It has been given to us by the Father; it is constantly growing under the teaching of the Word, so all we have to do is exercise it! And we exercise it by making a conscious choice to exercise it in the trial. We choose to believe! I choose to believe!

J. Full of Faith.

*“And Stephen, **full of faith and power**, did great wonders and miracles among the people.” Acts 6:8
“For he [Barnabas] was a good man, and **full of the Holy Ghost and of faith**: and much people was added unto the Lord.” Acts 11:24*

We look at the faith of these two men, Stephen and Barnabas, and we see that both of them were **full of faith**. The word for **full** is *pleres* and it has the idea of being full of something up to the top, such as in a glass of water. Or, as in the case of believers, where the soul is full of something. Which brings in the idea of a beginning of something, an adding to it and the place where it is full.

But we also see something else connected to that idea of being full of faith, which is faith in the Father and faith in the Word of God, and that is in the case of **Stephen** where he was full of faith and also full of **power!** And in the case of **Barnabas** he was full of faith and full of the **Holy Spirit!** So we have the ideas of faith, power and the Holy Spirit all linked together.

And it all makes sense when we read Romans 15:13, “*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.*” We see that God fills us with joy and peace in the sphere of believing, or in the sphere of us exercising faith in the Father and his Word. This results in us abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. So we have joy, peace, power and hope all being connected to faith. And because these men were full of faith and power, through the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit, they were able to minister respectively and mightily before the Lord.

K. Purifying the hearts.

“And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” Acts 15:9

Now when we talk about faith again, we must remember that when the Bible talks about faith it isn't speaking of some mystical thing that stands by itself all alone, but a **faith that must always have an object!** And the biblical object of faith must always be to begin with, faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, then after we are believers in Christ, faith in the Father, faith in his many promises and faith in the doctrinal teachings of the Word of God.

Now there is a cleansing of the believer's soul, through the act of regeneration by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation, then there is the post salvation cleansing of scar tissue from the soul, garbage in the soul, etc., as we move forward toward spiritual maturity.

Bible doctrine opens up those areas in the soul that restrict the Spirit's ministry in us, and we are operating in the sphere of faith in the promises of God's Word and the doctrines of Scripture that deal with our problem areas, we will have those problem areas cleansed from our souls.

When the Bible tells us that we walk by faith, faith in the Father's plan for our lives, faith in his power, faith in his provisions, faith in his protection, faith in his promises, faith in the process he uses to mature us, it's telling us that faith covers every aspect of our lives! Our actions, our decisions, our thinking, our ministries, the direction we take in life, where we go, what we do, who we marry, the jobs that we work at, the trials we go through, even the removal of scar tissue from the soul are all to be done out of faith in God and his Word!

L. From faith to faith.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from **faith to faith**: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.*” Romans 1:17 - **εκ πιστεως εις πιστιν** καθως γεγραπται ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται.

Actually it says, **out of faith**, *ek pisteos*, in the genitive singular, and **unto faith**, *eis pistin*, in the accusative singular. *Ek* with the genitive shows an exit from something with which there had been an earlier connection giving us the idea of origin. So we have an action that originates in faith and the idea of going from that faith unto something else - unto another concept of faith.

The something else is also denoted in the passage by the use of *eis pistin*. The preposition *eis* indicates a **goal, direction toward that goal, action, motion toward that goal, and then actual penetration into that goal**. So what we end up with is living in the dynamic of faith in the Lord and his Word on any given day and in any given concept, or situation we may find ourselves in, and then going from that localized concept of faith on to another concept of faith!

An individual believes on Jesus Christ as their Savior, thereupon their sins are completely forgiven and they are guaranteed the resurrection from the dead unto eternal life. From there their entire life is to be one of living by faith. Many try to turn their relationship with the Lord into a religion, or into their own personal code of morality, but the Christian life has been designed by God to be one of faith. Why? Because faith is nonmeritorious thereby leaving God free to bless us in his grace. Another reason why is because it is through the exercise of faith in the doctrines and promises of the Word of God, that moment by moment trust in him, that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit and are then living in the spiritual life dynamic.

There is never a time as believers that we can stop living by faith and resort to our works, although we try to do this all the time. God has so designed our lives here on earth that we have to live by faith, to live by that continual dependency upon him. And just about the time that we think that we have it all figured out, or when we've got everything all set up in our lives, then another test will come our way and drive us back to the throne of grace in faith asking for his help.

Life is full of trials and problems. We muddle around in them trying to get ourselves out of them to no avail. Then one day we get the bright idea of turning to God in prayer to help us, lo and behold he helps us, and we get through the trial! But that trial is not the last problem we will have in this life. Others will come and to get through them we will have to exercise faith in God's promises and doctrines and go through them to the other side. We are going from faith to faith. Or we are going out of one concept where we have exercised faith unto another concept where we will have to exercise faith.

Life is also full of opportunities; opportunities where we can exercise faith and opportunities where we can be blessed by God. These I call **faith objects**. Abraham had as his faith object a son. Noah had as his faith object deliverance from God's judgment. Moses' faith object was the reward for serving the Lord. The Bible is full of the records of God's people who had an object for their faith. And, as we go through life, we will find ourselves having faith objects. Maybe we moved by faith from one town to another because we wanted to make a better life for ourselves and our families, or to be under face to face teaching. All these and many more things are objects of faith toward which we are heading in our faith life on earth. From faith to faith.

M. Living by faith.

*“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **The just shall live by faith.**” Romans 1:17 “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but **the just shall live by his faith.**” Habakkuk 2:4 “Now **the just shall live by faith:** but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” Hebrews 10:38*

Both NT passages have the future middle indicative of *zao* for life, or to **live**. The future tense is used to embrace the time of the Christian's entire life from the point of their salvation, until they go to be with the Lord. It is an imperative future, where the future tense is used to express a command. So it isn't a request from God, nor is it a suggestion. It is **a command**; it is mandatory for all believer-priests to live their entire lives here on earth by faith in the Father and faith in his Word!

Bios is one of the Greek words for life and it has the following meanings. **One**, the period or duration of one's life here on earth. **Two**, the means of life, one's livelihood, maintenance. **Three**, The manner by which one lives their life, life in regard to one's moral conduct, their ethics, principles they live by.

Now the word we have here is **zao** and it does mean life as the antithesis of death. And it does have the idea of the vital life force in all of us. But as soon as a moral element is involved, or a manner of living one's life, or how one lives their life, or in its sacred use in a religious context, then it takes on a more noble or higher idea of life. **And so *zao* takes on the idea of life at its highest level!**

What this tells us is that Christians will live their lives here on earth. How they live them will vary from believer to believer. Some may live their lives down at the bottom, spiritually, mentally and morally. All will live their lives by the vital life force that exists in all of us in our human bodies. But there is another plane of life that exists that is far above all the others and this is **the life of faith!** What this tells us is that the highest form of life believers in Christ can live here on earth is the life of faith in God and his Word. Many believers err in trying to live morally superior lives, which they often are quick to display before other people, and they think this is the highest form of Christian life. Now there is nothing wrong with having one's own moral values, per se, that they live their own lives by, but they are not to replace the truly highest form of life available to all of us and that's living by faith in the Word of God.

This life of faith includes believing the doctrines of the teachers that God has placed over us. Believing the many promises listed in the Bible. Having our faith and trust in the Father as we live before him each day. Having faith in the Father's **plan** for our lives. Having faith in the Father's **promises**. Having faith in the Father's **power**. Having faith that the Father will **provide** for us. Having faith that the Father will **protect** us. Having faith in the **process** that the Father chooses to mature us and bring us to glory!

Now who does living by faith apply to? All believers in Jesus Christ. The Just, the Righteous, are to live by faith. Even the Son of God lived by faith while he was here on earth. Romans 1:17 points out believers in Christ, and so does Hebrews 10:38. But we see from Hebrews 10:37 that there is a reference being made to the Coming One, the Messiah of Israel, Jesus Christ, and that he, too, had to live by faith. And if he had shrunk back, God's soul would not have been pleased with him. And if we shrink back from faith, then God won't be pleased with us! Why? It is only faith that 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.”* Hebrews 11:6

N. Justified by faith.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” Romans 5:1 δικαιωθεντες ουν εκ πιστεως ειρηνην εχομεν προς τον θεον δια του κυριου ημων ιησου χριστου

The word for **justify** is *dikaioo* and is a forensic term borrowed from the courts of law and refers to the legal proceedings found in them. **Justification does not express an ethical change of conduct; it is not a term of ethics or morality, nor does it deal with emotions, but expresses the judicial acts of God where God formally and legally declares someone to be righteous.** It is entirely a legal term! It meant to pronounce one innocent or righteous in a court of law. While its opposite, to condemn, is to pronounce one guilty. We should not use the term innocent in Christianity for it means that one had not done anything wrong. To declare one righteous means that one can be **pronounced righteous**, even though he wasn't innocent.

All of this goes back to the Law of God, the Court of God and God as the Supreme Judge of all mankind. To be righteous meant that **one stood in right standing before the Law**. Which would mean that he had not broken the Law. If he had, he would have been guilty of it, pronounced guilty and condemned. The question is, (and also the problem), how does God pronounce one righteous in relation to the Law, when he is already guilty of breaking it? This goes back to the work of Christ on our behalf.

Christ died for the ungodly, that is, he died on our behalf. *“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”* Romans 5:6 The penalty for breaking the Law of God was death; whoever broke it had to die. Now we have Jesus Christ enter into the picture on our behalf; Christ died for us, that is, as our **substitute** and he paid the penalty for our sins.

When Christ was hanging on the cross, God imputed to him our sins and viewed him as a sinner, even though he was the only one on earth who had never sinned! When he took **our** sins upon himself, God viewed him now as a sinner, and God punished him for all our sins. Personally and legally Christ was totally innocent concerning this matter of breaking God's Laws, **but legally he was counted as being guilty at the moment when our sins were imputed to him**. He then suffered our punishment because he was counted as being guilty, even though he wasn't personally guilty.

And the same thing goes in reverse when it comes to this matter of righteousness. We were not righteous, but God views us as being righteous when Christ's righteousness is imputed to us! Do we deserve it? No! Neither did Christ deserve our sins imputed to him! Christ was righteous, but when our sins were imputed to him, God viewed him as unrighteous and punished him because of our sins. We were unrighteous, but when Christ's righteousness was imputed to us at the moment of our salvation, God then viewed us as being righteous and we now have God's favor and blessings.

Righteousness is that state one enjoys where he is in right standing with the Law. One can have this

standing if they have not broken any of God's laws, but we all have broken his Law! If one has never broken a law of God, then one would be righteous before the Law.

But there was another way he could be counted as being righteous, as Paul so wonderfully developed in Romans chapter four, and that was through faith in Jesus Christ! To the man who trusts God **his faith is counted as righteousness!** *“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness.**”* Romans 4:5 God counts faith in Christ as righteousness!

So to the one who trusts Christ as his Savior an entry is made into his account that says, “Faith in Christ”, and that faith in Christ is **counted or credited as righteousness**. The word for **count** is *logizomai* and was a bookkeeping term used to describe the entry an accountant made into his books.

David understood this when he said, *“Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”* Romans 4:7,8. He knew that the Lord could impute sin to an individual and that he could also impute righteousness.

God justifies wicked people; he justifies them if they have faith in Christ. He declares them to be righteous when he sees their faith, for he counts faith as righteousness even though they are wicked. Faith in Christ is the means by which we have been justified by God. We are not justified by our works, our goodness, our religion, our morality, or our personality.

By faith is *ek pisteos* and it tells us that this something is the means by which something happens, or the cause of it happening. The issue is being justified, of being declared righteous by God. How does this happen? What is the thing that causes it to happen? *Ek pisteos* in the genitive singular tells us that **it is faith in Christ that causes our justification to happen!**

Justified is in the aoist passive participle and the passive voice tells us that we have received the action of being justified. We did not justify ourselves by our actions, but God justified us! The action of the aoist participle occurs before the action of the main verb, which also tells us that **because of our justification we now have peace with God and have gained access into the grace of God**.

Romans 4:5 says that, **God justifies the wicked; he pronounces the wicked righteous when he sees their faith in Christ**. For when he sees faith he **counts** that faith as righteousness. Even though he's unrighteous, **his faith is counted as righteousness!** God cannot count our works of “righteousness” as being righteous because they aren't! Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the eyes of a holy God. But when he sees faith he counts that as righteousness. That's what people need to see, that's what Martin Luther saw from the Scriptures, and that's what launched the Protestant Reformation.

It must be emphasized again and again that the grammar shows that this justification, this being declared righteous by God, is a **one time event! It occurs only one time in the life of a believer in Christ and stands for the rest of his life and all eternity!** The aoist tense tells us that this happened **once**, at a point in time, sometime in the past in the believer's life. And the participial form tells us that it keeps on going **as an abiding principle of the legal state that he now enjoys**.

It is not an emotional concept. It is entirely a legal, judicial proceeding where God the Father pronounces the believer in Christ as being righteous. Too many Christians are looking for some sort of feeling to accompany their salvation and their Christian life as a sort of proof or evidence that they have been saved. But justification is not an emotional concept. It is something that God does for us

legally in his heavenly court. **Our salvation is first and foremost a legal matter and we need to keep this in mind.**

One cannot lose his salvation because one cannot lose or change his legal standing in heaven; it's a permanent legal standing before God. God has justified him; God has pronounced him righteous and that's **his legal standing forever!** *"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* The Christian *has, echo, peace with God.* This is something that we now possess as our own. It is our new found state with God. God isn't mad at us, and he doesn't hate us; he has accepted us in the Beloved.

The word **with God**, *pros ton theon*, (**with the God**), is used to denote a personal relationship with someone else that is friendly. This tells us that the one who has believed on Christ, the one who has trusted him as their personal Savior, has moved from a position of being an enemy of God and hostile toward him, into a personal friendly relationship. They have actually been moved into the new position where God is now their Father!

Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, is *dia* plus the genitive, which tells us of a medium through which an action passes before its accomplishment. A wall of our own hostility toward God stood between us and God. But because of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sakes, we now have gone through him into this state of having peace with God. But we have to go through Christ in order to have peace with God. And this occurs when we believe on Christ as our Savior.

O. Faith is counted as righteousness.

*"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness.**"* Romans 4:5 *"However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, **their faith is credited as righteousness.**"* Romans 4:5 NIV

Now righteousness and faith are not the same thing. Faith is a nonmeritorious concept in that it is not a work and there is no merit to faith. The only merit there is found in the **object** of one's faith, Jesus Christ, **not in the exercising of that faith!**

It's much like the idea of grocery coupons, where a coupon is worth one dollar toward a purchase of something. That coupon is not a dollar, nor is it worth a dollar, but the grocery store considers it to be a dollar toward a purchase. And it has every right to do so because it owns the store. Faith isn't righteousness, but God considers faith in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as being righteousness.

And when we talk about faith in Christ, or to believe on Christ, such as found in Acts 16:31, *"And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**"*, we find that in the Greek it has it as, **πιστευσον επι τον κυριον ιησουν χριστον.**

Now when the verb to **believe**, *pisteuo*, is used with **upon**, *epi*, and the accusative of direct object, **the Lord Jesus Christ**, then the word believe takes on the idea of trusting the Lord Jesus. Trusting takes in the ideas of depending on someone, dependence, leaning upon, placing your whole self upon, those sorts of ideas.

A tight rope walker pushes a wheelbarrow across a rope stretched between two points and comes back and asks the crowd if they believe he can put a person in it and push them across. The crowd nods that they believe he can! He then asks for a volunteer, but no one comes forward. That's the difference between belief and trust.

In the concept of what trust is about you are totally dependent upon the other person to save you, help you, carry you through danger. Whether it's the fireman carrying you out of a burning building, or a rescue worker rappelling you down from the side of a cliff, or a rescue swimmer diving under the water to save you from a watery grave, or a doctor performing life saving surgery on you. There is nothing you can do, but put your trust in the one saving you. And so it is in the area of salvation. **Only Jesus Christ can save us!** And for him to save us our trust must be in him completely! Not him, plus ourselves. Not him, plus our church. Just **Him**.

P. Steps of faith.

*“And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the **steps of that faith** of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.” Romans 4:12*

First of all, this is directed to those men and women who have believed on Jesus Christ as their Savior. The passage clearly teaches that Abraham is their father. *“that he might be the **father** of all them that believe,”* Romans 4:11a And secondly the standing of righteousness is imputed to us because we have believed on Christ. *“that righteousness might be **imputed** unto them also.”* Romans 4:11b

So we know that we are dealing with our post salvation experience as believers in Christ, and as believers in Christ, we are to live by faith. And in this passage we see that our journey of faith is step by step, as Abraham journeyed in his life of faith step by step.

Now Abraham had believed on Christ as his Savior back in Ur of the Chaldees, where he also received his call from the Lord to go into the land that he was going to give him. *“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:”* Genesis 12:1 But instead of going directly there, he followed his father, Terah, up to an area called Haran. It was only after his father died that he finally set out to the land God wanted him at. *“So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.”* Genesis 12:4

We look at the long journey that Abraham made, and at a time when he was seventy-five years old, but we often overlook that this journey was made one step at a time. And each step Abraham made was an opportunity for Abraham to wonder if he had made the right decision, especially at his age and going to a foreign country, where he had no idea of what kind of people lived there. Yet each step Abraham made was a step of faith in the calling of God for his life.

Because we take walking for granted, we need to review what is entailed. First of all there is the destination or goal in mind, and that's something we always have to keep before us. Then there is looking a little down the road to make sure we are going in the right direction. Then there is the ground right before us, so we have to watch where we place our feet looking for unstable footing, holes, snags, etc., lest we trip, fall, or break an ankle. We also need to be aware of what might lie off the path to the one side or another that can hurt us, such as, vipers, or anything else.

The path we are on is the plan and will of God for our lives. Our walking down that path is our **journey** through life. What keeps us from going off the path is the Word of God. The borders of our path that we walk within are the grace of God on one side and the Word of God on the other. What gives us our vision to see what lies ahead is our **faith**. And what gives us **strength** to keep moving forward one step

at a time is the empowering of the Holy Spirit as we exercise faith in the promises of God.

Q. Strengthened by faith.

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;” Romans 4:20 - εις δε την επαγγελιαν του θεου ου διεκριθη τη απιστια αλλ ενεδυναμωθη τη πιστει δους δοξαν τω θεω

“Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God.” Romans 4:20. “No unbelief or distrust made him waver (doubtingly question) concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God,” (Amplified Bible)

“He did not waver” is the aoist passive indicative of *diakrino*. “Was strengthened in, or, **by his faith**”, is the aoist passive indicative of *endunamoo*. And “giving God the glory” is the aoist active participle of *didomi*. It doesn't say that **his faith** was strengthened, but that **he** was strengthened! He was inwardly strengthened by **faith**! So, if **he** was strengthened, then **what** was it that strengthened him?

Even Arthur Way captures this concept in his translation. “Nay, his faith was not weakened when he took note of his own physical condition – a man with one foot in the grave (he was some hundred years old) – and the loss of vital power in Sarah's womb. But, when he turned his eyes towards the promise of God, there came no distrust to make him waver. Nay, rather it was by that faith that he was filled with virile vigour, when once he had, by this trusting in God, rendered glory to him, and was possessed by the conviction that God can perform whatever he promised.”

Diakrino, to waver, was to vacillate between two things, **belief and unbelief**. And with the negative ou, it was emphatic. He definitely did not vacillate between belief and unbelief, even when he seriously contemplated his and Sarah's state of being sexually dead. Abraham believed the promise of God, even though he was in such a **hopeless state**; hopeless, that is, in the eyes of man. This whole episode appears to be pointing to a later period in Abraham's life. He had been promised a son by God, and other things, yet he still had not received them. Year after year of his life went by and still no son; but he was still waiting, hoping, trusting that *Yahweh* would come through on his promise.

Now a new factor had been brought into the equation, something that he didn't have to deal with before. And that was he and Sarah had gotten to the place in life, which happens to all people if they live long enough, that neither of them were capable of having children. And as he considered his own body and Sarah's, and what all that meant, he still remembered *Yahweh's* promise to him and kept on believing it. But now he knew, that if he was going to have that son, then it really was going to have to be **God** who would bring it to pass. Before, one could think that he could contribute some part concerning the matter, and God would somehow make it all happen on the inside. But now he sees that it is going to have to be **all from God** to make it come true. And so he believed and was totally trusting in God to make it all happen.

It says that he was **strengthened in his faith**, and the word for **strengthening** is the aoist passive indicative of *endunamoo*, which means to be strengthened inwardly, to be **in-strengthened**. It refers to the dynamic of being strengthened on the inside. The question is was he strengthened **in** his faith? Or **by** his faith? The passive voice tells us that it was Abraham received the action of strengthening, or more accurately, the inner strengthening. So what was it that strengthened him, or enabled him to have sex? We could say that his faith was strengthened, when he considered the promise of God, and that

would be true. But it was through his faith in the promise of God that he became sexually empowered and was able to have sex with Sarah once again. It was God who empowered Abraham!

The dative case can be used both for in the sphere of something; or, the instrument by which something happens. **If we say that his faith was strengthened; what strengthened it?** He did not waver, stagger, through unbelief, but was strengthened by his faith. I guess it all depends on whether we are looking at the soul as a whole, or the activity of faith going on in the soul. Obviously, one can be strengthened in his faith; becoming stronger in faith, dispelling all the weaknesses of doubt, etc.; **and one can be strengthened, and is, in his soul by faith.**

We have seen under the doctrine of metabolization, that when the believer believes the promises of God, that faith in the Word changes the essence of God's Word into spiritual phenomenon, which in turn strengthens the soul. And that's what we have here. Abraham was strengthened by his faith in the promise of God. This act converted the spiritual energy found in God's Word into the spiritual energy needed to stabilize and strengthen the believer's soul.

And it says that he *gave glory to God*. Well, what was it that he did that glorified God? This glorifying the Lord, orist active participle, occurred **before** he had received his son. It would be natural for him to give God the glory after he received Isaac, but he did it beforehand! The action of glorifying the Lord was in the orist participle, which ties all into Abraham believing the Lord. It was not some meaningless ritual of words that people say that gives God the glory, but the fact that the believer actually believes God! All during this time that he was waiting on the fulfillment of the promise, Abraham was not weakening in his faith, but actually getting stronger. And what was it that did it? The fact that he kept on believing God's promise to him! And this is also what glorified the Lord as well.

Abraham was fully persuaded by faith - "*Being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.*" Romans 4: 21. The word for being **fully persuaded** is *plerophoreo* and it means to fill up the mind with thoughts or convictions, to be fully convinced. I guess if we were to look at the mind from the standpoint of a container that has nothing in it at all, all the way to being filled up to the top. From the standpoint of positive or negative thoughts, one could say that his mind no longer has any negative thoughts, only positive ones. Or we could say the same thing about peace, happiness, etc.. But here, with Abraham, (and us), it deals with faith; one's mental conviction about a matter.

In the mind, as an unbeliever, the mind has no faith towards God, but when he believes on God, he has some faith; a little faith in his mind, but lot's of unbelief. It's like having a crucible with a little gold at the bottom and filled the rest of the way with dross. But hopefully, as the years go by, the volume of one's mind will be filling up more and more with faith and replacing all that unbelief.

Now Abraham believed God when he had made his promise to him; and he believed God all his life. And when he became sexually inactive, he still believed God! **But something else happened along the way, which really strengthened his faith; and that was when he became fully convinced in his own mind that *Yahweh* had the power to do what he promised!** He had already come to this place before he became sexually dead. We don't know exactly what year it occurred, but somewhere along the way he had become convinced about the power of God. And in the passive voice, it tells us that he had received this conviction; **something had convinced him about God's power.**

Epangello, the word for **promise** was a **legal concept**; and in the perfect tense, it tells us that it had already been stated and stood as an existing fact year after year. *Dunatos*, the word for **power**, though, was used with *eimi* in the present tense, which shows that God continued to still have the power.

Yahweh had told him in the past that he was going to give him a son, and he continued to have the power to do it, even though Abraham no longer had the power.

R. Access to the grace of God.

*“By whom also we have **access by faith** into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:2 - δι ου και την προσαγωγην εσχηκαμεν τη πιστει εις την χαριν ταυτην εν η εστηκαμεν και καυχουμεθα επ ελπιδι της δοξης του θεου.*

This concept begins in Romans 5:1, where it says that we have been **justified by faith**, that is, faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior. *“Therefore being **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* To be **justified** meant that one has been declared righteous by God, because he has believed on Jesus Christ.

In the orist passive participle of *dikaioo* it tells us that we have received the action of being justified by God, who is the justifier of men, and that it's an action that is never repeated for it never needs to be repeated. Our being justified by God is a one time act where God declares us to be righteous individuals before his court in heaven, with the result that we are righteous today and we will be righteous for all eternity.

And the reason, once again, is because of our faith in Jesus Christ for when God sees our faith he counts that faith as righteousness. *“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Romans 4:5* And the reason for that is because faith is not a work of that individual, nor is it a concept of the individual's personal morality (righteousness), it is nonmeritorious and is the only thing acceptable to the concept of God's grace.

It begins with **by whom**, or, **through whom**, referring back to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the intermediate agency by which the believer in Christ has gained access into the grace of God. If one rejects Jesus Christ, then they not only are rejecting the grace of God, but will never have entrance into God's grace and will now have to face a righteous God in their own sinful works.

The perfect tense of *echo*, to **have**, that we **have access** into the grace of God by faith, is used here to denote that this is a permanent state that we have entered into. Our standing in the grace of God is permanent and eternal, just as our righteousness is permanent and eternal, and just as our being the children of God is permanent and eternal.

The word for **access** is *prosagogen*, from to lead into, and it has several uses. Here it is to be taken in the sense of courtly procession, or courtly protocol, rather than a court of law. The idea is one of being led into the chamber-presence of a monarch. This not only signifies that one has gained access to the monarch, but also that he must be led into the monarch's presence by another person.

The individual has no standing in his own person, nor can he walk into the king's presence by himself and in his own person. Instead, he must be led into the king's presence by someone who has standing before the king, that is, someone who has already been accepted by the king. The Word clearly teaches us that Jesus Christ is the One who has been accepted by the eternal God and it is only Christ that has standing in the presence of God. Therefore, it is Christ who will be leading the believer in Christ into the chamber-presence of the eternal God. *“Through whom, [Jesus Christ], we have access”.*

The picture would be like a king in some foreign land seated upon his throne with all sorts of people who would like to have an audience with him, so that he might bestow some favor upon them. But to

do that, the individuals must have standing with the king themselves, or have access to him through someone else who does have standing with the king.

For this an *Introducer* is needed. This would be one who has legal standing before the king and one who has been accepted by the king. Now if the *Introducer* is a son or relative to the king, so much the better. For believers in Christ, Jesus Christ is our *Introducer* to the eternal Father. He is the one who will lead us into the chamber-presence of God, and he is both **our brother** and **God's Son!**

And not only is he **our brother**, he is **our personal representative to God**. Even though we are not before God in his chamber-presence *in person*, (we are still here on earth in person), we are there in the presence of God in *the person of Jesus Christ* our personal representative.

The grammar of this passage tells us so much. Therefore *having been **justified** by faith* in Christ, the aorist passive participle of *dikaioo*. *We have **peace** with God*, the present active indicative of *echo*. We now have permanent **access** to the grace of God for all eternity, the perfect active indicative of *echo*. We now have a permanent **standing** in this grace of God, the perfect active indicative of *histemi*. And we now **rejoice** in the hope of the glory of God. The present middle indicative of *kauchaomai*.

The word *histemi*, **standing**, refers to one's legal standing in court, or before the presence of a king. What this tells us is that the believer in Christ has a legal and permanent standing before God. The Lord Jesus Christ has been accepted by the eternal Father and has brought us into the presence of God. And because he has been accepted by God, and because he has brought us into the presence of God in his own person, we now have been accepted by God and have a permanent standing with him.

Now that Christ has provided us **access** to God and now that we have standing before God, we are free to go back into the presence of God as often as we wish to receive all the grace he has for us. But it's up to us to do this. We have this access to God and we should be constantly enjoying it. Which is what we are instructed to do! *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”* Hebrews 4:16

When the Bible says that Christ **died for us** using the word *huper*, it brings out **four aspects** of **what** he did, for **whom** he did it and **why** he did it. The first one is **protective**. *Huper* always has the idea that an action is performed to protect someone else. The second is **causative**, in that he was caused to perform this action to protect the other person. The third aspect of *huper* is **representative**, which is brought out by the term, *“on behalf of”*, in that, one is represented in law or religion by another person. And the fourth one is **substitutionary**, which is brought out by the term, *“instead of, or, in his stead, or in his place”*, in that he actually takes the place of the other person.

A lawyer will represent us in a court of law, that is, he will act on our behalf. But a lawyer will not act in place of us, in our stead, that is, he will not take our place by taking our punishment. Christ is both our **representative** before God as our defense attorney in the legal arena, and our High Priest in the religious area. In both areas he acts before God on our behalf. And as our **substitute** he has taken our place on the cross by taking our punishment.

Now when we talk about us having access to the throne of grace, it because of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has standing before the throne of God and thereby has the right to be heard. His legal standing is one of righteousness and was accepted by God when he ascended into heaven almost two thousand years ago. But, because he is our personal representative, **we also** have standing before the throne of God. Which means that we will be heard as well! We are not there *in person*, for our person is down here on earth. But we are there in the person of Jesus Christ. And this standing we have is a **permanent**

state. We will always have legal standing before God because of our faith *in Christ*.

S. Comes from hearing the Word of God.

“*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 - αρα η πιστις εξ ακοης η δε ακοη δια ρηματος θεου.

One of the tenets that Arminiasts hold to is that they believe every unsaved individual possesses the faith necessary to believe on Christ as their Savior. All they need to do is get to the place where they become willing to believe and then make that decision to do so. While the Scriptures show that man is neither willing to come to Christ, nor does he have the type of faith necessary to believe on Christ.

The Scriptures show that man is saved by the grace of God, through faith in Christ, and that this is a gift from God. “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*” Ephesians 2:8 God provided the grace, God provided Jesus Christ, God provided our salvation, and God provided the type of faith needed to trust Christ for our salvation. And this faith does not originate in ourselves, but in the Word of God!

So faith, that is, *the faith*, originates from the source of hearing the teaching of the Word of God. It comes to us through the instrumental agency, dia, of the doctrinal communication of God's Word. Which also means that if there is no doctrinal teaching, or no accurate teaching of the Word, then the believer in Christ will not be able to develop their faith.

By the word of God, and in some translations, *by the word of Christ*. *Rhematos* looks at a specific doctrine being taught. In this passage, where the subject matter is salvation, Paul explains where this faith to believe on Christ comes from, or what its source is. It comes from the Word of God itself. More specifically, it comes through the doctrines pertaining to the person and work of Jesus Christ, dia rhematos theou, or the Gospel of Christ.

This reveals to us how faith is developed in the soul of the unbeliever prior to salvation; it comes through the sound and accurate teaching of the Word of God concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ. The Lord also brings this out on how people come to him for salvation. He says they are all taught by the Father. “*It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*” John 6:45

So faith comes, is developed in us, by the hearing of the message being taught and the hearing comes by the Word of God. Whether it is the faith needed to trust Christ initially as our Savior, or the faith necessary to live by after we are saved, we get faith by listening to the teaching of Bible doctrine.

This entails that we have two things, both of which God supplies to us. One, the accurate teaching of his Word, and two, the men he has commissioned and given to the Church. As stated over and over, faith must have an object and its object has to be the Word of God. And for us to develop faith in our souls, we must have the accurate teaching of God's Word. When we hear the truth, there is something aroused in our souls, something “comes to life”, so to speak, and that something is **the faith!**

Faith is always connected to the Word of God and so is grace. In fact, grace, faith and truth all come in the same package. **When God extends grace to us**, all the merit lies in the one giving grace, not the one receiving grace. **When we exercise faith toward God**, all the merit lies in the object of faith, not in the one exercising faith. So God has all the merit and all the glory. And when the truth is in the picture, God still gets all the merit because he has sent his truth to us and given us the faith to believe

his truth, so that we might receive his grace!

T. Given to every believer.

“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.” Romans 12:3 - εκαστω ως ο θεος εμερισεν μετρον πιστεως

One needs to first put this in context. Paul is not addressing the entire world, nor is he referring to the entire world. He is addressing believers in Christ, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren,”* Romans 12:1 Then he addresses the believers in the group there, *“to every man that is among you”*, or to *all* believers there, *pas*, God hath dealt to every man, *hekastos* – each believer, the measure of faith.

The KJV translates *merizo* as **dealt**. It referred to a distribution, or apportionment, of something to someone and meant to apportion, assign, or to deal out. The word *metron* spoke of a **measurement** of something, here it's a measure of faith. The aoist tense of *merizo* shows that this measurement of faith was apportioned to each believer in Christ at the moment of their salvation.

The faith that we needed to believe on Christ as our Savior has been given to us by God in his grace. It is all of grace; God provided Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sins; God provided the faith needed to believe on him; God gave us to him and brought us to him. And God provided the faith to believe on Christ through the hearing of the gospel message about Christ. It is all of grace so no one can boast.

Every believer in Christ has been apportioned a measure of faith at the moment of salvation. There is nothing for any believer to brag about, for he or she has been given the faith to believe on Christ just like any other believer in Christ. Christians are so prone to brag about something that they have, or something that they have done; they have to have something, it seems, that makes them different than other believers so they can brag about it. But here, by God giving us all a measure of faith, he has leveled the playing field. We are all sinners. We all have had Christ die on the cross for our sins. And we all have been given the faith needed to believe on him.

Now that we have this initial faith to believe on Christ as a gift of God's grace, what are we going to do with it after we are saved? We know that we are to live by faith; we are to walk through this life by faith; we are to make all of our decisions by faith; our faith is to grow and develop and so much more. So the question is, are we? And if we do, then how are we to get the faith necessary to accomplish all that the Father says?

Here's where we go back to the same principle of where faith comes from. It comes from hearing the teaching of the Word of God. It began with the gospel message, but faith is to grow in so many other areas. To do this we will need a consistent and accurate intake of the sound teaching of the Word of God. This is the reason why God has supplied the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher and the local church.

As the Pastor-Teacher faithfully and accurately teaches the entire counsel of God's Word to his flock, the believers, who sit under his teaching ministry, will be given the various and many doctrines that their souls need. And as they listen to the teaching of Bible Doctrine their faith will grow, become stronger and get to the place of completion.

If our Savior had to live by faith in this life, so do we. He was the **Author** of the faith; he originated it and lived by this faith himself. He also was the **Finisher** of this faith, in that, his faith in the Father was brought to a state of perfected completion. Not only that, he also is the **Completer** of this faith in those

who believe in him. “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our [the] faith;” Hebrews 12:2a

U. Our acts must be motivated by faith.

“And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**” Romans 14:23 - ο δε διακρινόμενος εαν φαγη κατακεκριται οτι ουκ εκ πιστεως παν δε ο ουκ εκ πιστεως αμαρτια εστιν.

What this passage teaches us is that everything we do as believers in Christ must proceed out of faith. We walk by faith, not by sight; we make our decisions by faith; we claim the promises of God by faith; we metabolize Bible doctrine by faith; we receive the empowering of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of faith. The life of faith is so important that, if what we do does not proceed from faith, it is sin.

Here's why. We became believers in Christ by faith in Christ. We received the Holy Spirit at that moment, who regenerated us creating a new nature in us. It is this new nature that we are to live our lives by. If we are not living by the new nature, then we are under the control of the old nature. The concept of faith is what applies to the new nature, and without faith, then all we are left with is the works of the flesh of the old nature and all the flesh can produce is human sin or human good.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians, he clarified how they received the Holy Spirit in the first place. It was by faith in Christ. “*This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*” Galatians 3:2 He then goes on to show that perfection, or maturity, is only accomplished after salvation by faith, that is, faith in the Word. “*Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*” Galatians 3:3 Anything outside the dynamic of faith in the Father and his Word puts that believer living life in the flesh.

V. Standing fast in the faith.

“*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*” 1 Corinthians 16:13 - γρηγορειτε στηκετε εν τη πιστει ανδριζεσθε κραταιουσθε.

Both verbs **watch ye**, *gregoreo*, and **standing fast**, *steko*, are in the present active imperative telling us that we are **commanded** to both be on the lookout for and to be standing fast in the faith. *Gregoreo* was used of the guard posted around the camp, or the watchman on the wall, who were to always be on guard for any sign of the enemy. *Steko* was used when the soldier was given the order to stand his ground in the face of the enemy's attack.

Now we notice here, once again, that we have the word **faith** used with the definite article, which draws our attention to the uniqueness of this kind of faith. When we have **the faith**, what we are looking at is the concept of faith in the Father, faith in his Word, faith in his promises and faith in the doctrines of the Word of God.

We also see that it refers back to **the faith** that Christ originated and instituted for the people of God here on earth, which is faith in the Father, his plan, his promises, his power, his protection, his provisions and the process he uses to bring us to maturity. This faith is **the faith** that the Lord Jesus also lived by here on earth in his humanity, and it was **the faith** that he was perfected in personally.

So standing in **the faith**, faith in the word of God with the filling of the Holy Spirit, which is accomplished by faith occupation with Bible doctrine, will enable us to withstand the continual pull of the world system on us, to pull away from the control and influence of the flesh nature and enable us to

withstand the attacks of Satan against our souls and lives.

W. Walking By faith.

“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)” 2 Corinthians 5:7 - δια πιστεως γαρ περιπατουμεν ου δια ειδους

Verse seven is a parenthesis between verses six and eight, which is used to explain something, or to add something, to the passage and which also ties in with the context. And we might not understand how it does fit into the context unless we understand the parallelism.

We have believers living here on earth and we have Christ dwelling in heaven. Both live in two totally separate worlds, not only different from each other, but completely separate from each other. But Paul does not want us to think that just because we here live here in a different location, or dimension, from where Christ dwells in heaven, that we are cut off from him.

It is through faith in the Word that this gap between heaven and earth is bridged, not only in the matter of salvation, but in our daily spiritual communion with Christ. In heaven we have spiritual concepts. Here on earth we have physical concepts that we live our lives by in the material world. But when we live **by faith in the Word we bridge the gap** and are able to live a spiritual life in a material world!

The present active indicative of *peripateo* does mean to **walk**, but it is used figuratively to refer to one's walk in life. **Sight**, *eidos*, refers to physical sight, seeing, outward form, or appearance. Other concepts, such as, our journey through life and the path we are taking also fit into the overall concept.

We live in this life in the material world by sight in the sense of being able to comprehend to and relate to the things that exist around us. It is only through one or more of the five senses: sight, sound, touch, taste and smell that our souls are able to relate to that which exists in the material world around us.

But to be able to relate to the things of heaven and to Christ, who dwells in the other *world* of heaven, we cannot live by physical sight. We must live by faith. Faith is the means by which we are able to *see* into heaven. Physically we are separated from heaven, seeing that we live in two totally different realms, but we are connected to heaven spiritually.

What's in view here is the soul. The soul, for the present time, is trapped in this physical body only to be released at physical death. It cannot see into heaven, it cannot see Christ, and it cannot see into all the wonderful things that await it in eternity. It is presently trapped in this dimension, in this physical world and in this physical body. **Only in heaven will we see Christ face to face!**

In fact, the soul's only contact it has with the outside physical world is through the five senses of the material body it is existing in! It is able to perceive that which is going on around it on the outside through sight, sound, smelling, touch and taste! We **see** trees and nature, we **smell** water and flowers, we **hear** the birds chirping, we **touch** the flowers and **taste** the fruit. From these five senses we are able to gather all the information that exists around us for our souls to be able to comprehend this life. But is by means of faith in Bible doctrine that we are able to see spiritually, not only so we can navigate in this life as we journey through it, but also to see into heaven!

X. The faith of Christ.

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but **by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified **by the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:16 - ειδοτες οτι ου δικαιουται ανθρωπος εξ εργαων νομου εαν μη **δια πιστεως ιησου χριστου** και ημεις εις χριστον ιησουν επιστευσαμεν ινα δικαιωθωμεν **εκ πιστεως χριστου** και ουκ εξ εργαων νομου διοτι ου δικαιωθησεται εξ εργαων νομου πασα σαρξ.

“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.” Galatians 2:20 χριστω συνεσταυρωμαι ζω δε ουκετι εγω ζη δε εν εμοι χριστος ο δε **νυν** ζω εν σαρκι **εν πιστει ζω τη του υιου του θεου** του αγαπησαντος με και παραδοντος εαυτον υπερ εμου.

Christ had to share in our humanity in every respect, except one; he did not sin. But he became sin for us, in that our sins were imputed to him on the cross and he paid the penalty for them. “*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 2:14

In this sharing in our humanity he also had to live by the same *modus vivendi* as we are to live by and that is by faith in God. The genitive in Galatians 2:16 should be taken as a subjective genitive, *the faith of Jesus Christ*, rather than the objective genitive of *faith in Jesus Christ*. The same idea is found in the latter half of the verse where it says that we are justified by the faith of Christ, *ek pisteos christou*, that is, we owe our justification to the faith originating in Christ. **The one idea draws our attention to what we have done, our faith in Christ**, while the other, and the more proper, **draws our attention to what Christ has done, the faith of Christ!**

The same idea carries right on down into verse twenty where Paul writes, “*and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God*.” He's talking about his post salvation experience and says that the life that he **now** lives in the flesh as a believer in Jesus Christ is due solely to the faith of Jesus Christ!

There are two covenants in view here. The old covenant based upon keeping the Law and the new and better covenant that Christ was going to institute to replace the old one. The old covenant was based upon keeping the Law, while the new covenant was based solely on faith in God. If one kept the Law perfectly, which no man did except for Jesus Christ, then he or she would have a right standing with God. Which no one did, except for Christ. But under the new covenant there was the concept of faith. One would have to keep faith perfectly, to keep believing and trusting God each and every moment of their existence here on earth, no matter what happened, or what they had to go through, if they were to be considered righteous before a holy God. Which no one did, except Christ!

The Law was given to Israel, but it broke it over and over thereby breaking the covenant with God. But it still had to be kept! Now enter into the scene the Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful covenant partner, who was the only one to ever keep the Law perfectly. And his right standing before the Law, because he kept the Law, would be imputed to anyone who trusted him as their Savior. And a new and better covenant was brought in to replace it, after Christ fulfilled the conditions of the first covenant, and this covenant was based upon faith, which none of us ever kept – but Christ did! So his right standing before the new covenant, because of his faith, is now imputed to us.

Y. Blessed by faith.

“So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Galatians 3:9 ὥστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογούνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ ἀβραάμ.

What this passage shows is that it is because of our faith that we are blessed by God. Faith in Christ as our Savior, which puts us in the place of blessing positionally, and then faith in the Word after we are saved, so that God can bless us in his grace.

The passage says, *ek pisteos*, or, **out of faith**, which shows that the origin from whence our blessings come is not because of our race, nor our sex, nor our “morality”, nor our works, nor our sincerity, our good intentions, religiosity, or personality – **but out of our faith!**

It also says that we are blessed in union with Abram. What is it, then, that unites us with Abram? It is our faith in the Lord! Abraham believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, just as we do. So it is his faith and our faith in Christ that unites us!

There are two ways that God will deal with humanity, by **grace** or by his **justice**. Under **justice** God gives to man according as his actions deserve. But under **grace** God deals with us by his undeserved, unearned favor. When anyone seeks favor from God based upon his works, his morality, etc., then God's justice is brought into play. But under justice God will give him according to what he deserves. And in the case of sinful man there will be no blessing, only cursing because of his sinfulness.

But if anyone seeks the favor of God based solely upon God's **grace**, then God is free to deal with him according to his divine favor, which is to shower him with grace gifts from above. One of the blessings from God is that he will not deal with us as our sinful actions deserve. “*He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*” Psalms 103:10

But what does there have to be in place in an individual's life for God to deal with him or her based upon his grace? The answer is **faith!** First of all, faith in Christ as one's Savior. And then living one's life based upon faith, faith in the Father, faith in his Word, faith in the promises of God. It is through faith that we now have access to this grace of God. “*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*” Romans 5:2

Now when we look at the concept of faith, there is no merit in faith itself. The only merit found in the matter of exercising faith and faith's object is in the **object of faith, not in the subject** exercising faith! And the object of faith is always God and his Word. But when we look at the concept of grace, there is no merit in the object of grace. All merit lies in the one who is giving the grace! Which would be Christ as one's Savior and the Father giving us his grace blessings. So either way we look at it, whether looking at grace or faith, all merit lies in God! And God gets **all** the glory!

The Jews mistakenly thought that they were under the blessing of *Yahweh* because they had descended from Abraham. They thought because they were racial descendants of Abraham and had been circumcised they were entitled to God's blessing! Yet they had set aside the most important thing about Abraham and that was he was a man of faith. Faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior and faith in the promises that *Yahweh* had made to him. So here we are today. Do we want God's blessings on our lives? If we do, then we must see that his blessings only come to us through the exercising of faith in his Word. For it is only through faith that his grace blessings can flow to us.

Z. The Messiah will live by faith.

“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”
Hebrews 10:38 - ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται και εαν υποστειληται ουκ ευδοκει η ψυχη μου εν αυτω.

The standard approach on this passage is that it refers to believers in Christ. Now it is true that it applies to believers, but the direct interpretation of this passage is that it refers to Jesus the Messiah. Now **the Righteous One**, *ho de dikaios*, shall live by faith.

If we back up to the context of verse 37, we have, “*And he that shall come will come*”, ο ερχομενος ηξει, *ho erchomenos hexei*. “*He who is coming*” is the present active participle of *erchomai* used with the definite article and could be rendered, “**The Coming One**”. By the use of the definite article, “**The Coming One**”, instead of the indefinite article, a Coming One, the Holy Spirit leaves no doubt as to who is in mind – the Messiah of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ! The term, *the Coming One*, is a familiar usage in the OT to the coming Messiah, so we know that we're talking about the Messiah here.

The Israelites, both in the OT and in the first century, knew who the phrase referred to, “*The Coming One*” referred to Israel's Messiah; he who would rule over the nation. Often when the Rabbis would try to teach patience to the people, they would refer to the Messiah as “The Coming One”. They would say, “The Coming One” will come and all must wait patiently for him. But for the believer in Christ we know that **He** is this “*Coming One*” and we must wait patiently for his return!

The first word for **come** is *erchomai*, but now the text switches over to a different word for **come**, *heko*. *Heko* was primarily used in the mystery religions to denote the coming of a deity from the heavens to man who lived on the earth! It was an entrance statement where the god of that particular religion was now coming into the world of man. So what this is stating is that Jesus Christ, who is *The Coming One*, and the Messiah of Israel, is **God!** And that **he is coming back to earth as God!**

The translators failed to bring out the significance of the present active participle of *erchomai* and should have translated it as “*the Coming One*”. The second thing the KJV missed out on is the shift of words from *erchomenos*, “*The Coming One*”, to *heko*, “*will come*”. *Erchomai* simply brings out the idea that someone is coming to see you. While *heko* brings out the added idea that not only is this person coming to see you, but he is God!

This is a reference to Christ's first entrance into the world and also pointing out his return to earth, but one has to ask himself why? Why is the writer bringing it up here at this point? **The reason why he brings up this reference to Christ is that he is making a case for the absolute importance of living by faith, and he is bringing up the important point that even The Coming One had to live by faith while he was here in the world!**

The KJV has it as, “**Now the just shall live by faith:**” When translated like this it can lead one to interpret this as a reference to all believers in Christ, but it isn't! It is solely a reference to Jesus Christ, but the writer is giving it to us for application. **If Jesus Christ had to live by faith on earth in his humanity, and he did, then we have to live by faith also!**

But as we can clearly see it is, “*But the Righteous (One) will live by faith*”. Now one can say that this is a reference to believers in Christ, as mentioned before, for the Scriptures often refer to them as such, “*The just shall live by faith.*”, Galatians 3:11 “*The just shall live by faith.*”, Romans 1:17

All of these references in the Bible to Christians living by faith have the same thing in common and

that is they were taken out of Habakkuk 2:4, which is rendered in the Greek as, ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται, “*But my righteous (one) will live by faith*”, and that passage refers to Jesus Christ!

Now when we go down through history we find that there has only been one truly righteous man that has lived on earth and belonged solely to God, and that was his Son, Jesus Christ. All of God's people on earth, both OT and NT, are referred to as the righteous, or the just, but there is only one person on earth that has carried the title of being **God's Righteous One**. The Apostle John refers to him as the Righteous One, “*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ **the righteous (one)**.” 1 John 2:1*

Now **the Righteous One** in this verse is **the Coming One** in the preceding verse, stating once again that this is a reference to Jesus Christ. So what we have here is not a direct reference to believers in Christ, but to Christ himself, and by way of **application**, it refers to believers in that they have to live by faith. Now that we know that this refers to Jesus Christ, the next thing that we need to see is that he also lived by faith. The word for to *live* is *zao* and it meant to pass time or life in a particular manner, to subsist in life, to exist, or to have being. Life, the noun, is the **state** of existing; living, the verb, tells us something about the **manner** in which we exist.

This does not tell us that Christ was alive, for we know that. If he simply wanted to denote his existence he would say, “*I am*”. From the OT background of the term, “*I am*”, it tells us that he had always existed. But with the verb *zao* it tells us something about the manner in which Christ lived his life here on earth. He lived by faith!

By faith, *ek pisteos*, is the ablative of means, which gives us the source and means by which an act occurs. Christ lived his life from the source of faith, or by means of faith in the Father's Word, doctrines and promises. The noun, faith, denotes a state of anything. It tells us that Christ lived in the state of faith. That is, he lived believing the Father's promises that he had made to him; he relied on the Father's power and grace provisions; he was confident in the Father's will and plan; and his trust was completely in the Father.

Now some may have a problem with the fact that Christ lived his life here on earth by faith, but the Scriptures have a lot to say about that. We must remember that we are not talking about the deity of Christ, but Christ living life in his **humanity!** **Now how could one originate this faith concept and bring it to its completion if he did not live by the same faith himself?**

One passage concerning Christ's faith is 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 remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*” Another passage is Matthew 21:21, “*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have **faith**, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*”

And another passage is Hebrews 12:2a, “*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our **faith**;*”, *αφορωντες εις τον της πιστεως αρχηγον και τελειωτην ιησουν*. Now the word for author is *archegos* and can be rendered as: **Author, Prince, Captain, Pioneer and Founder**. It signified one who took the lead in something, its originator, the source from which something came, his supremacy in it and his personal participation in it.

It was also used of a **trail blazer**, as well as a **pioneer**. It had a military application referring to the one

who went out marking or blazing a trail for the others who were following behind could see the marks he left behind and follow his path. Another application of it along that line was that it referred to the one who cleared all the obstacles so that the main body could follow the trail and get to their destination.

So looking at *archegos* from the standpoint of a pioneer or **trail blazer**, Christ would be the one blazing the trail for us to follow and we are in the main body. We might stray off the path to the left or to the right, but come back to the marks he left for us along the trail. The marked trail tells us that this is the path to follow.

Archegos was also used of “**The Hero**”. Now the classical hero was the one who overcame all obstacles and adversities to found a city and then named the city after himself. Many cities throughout the middle east and Europe were named along this line. Even today we name cities in America after their founders.

Jesus Christ, **our hero**, has built a city in heaven for us to live in; he came to earth to gather out a people for himself; he went back to this city; and has blazed the trail of faith for us to follow. It begins by us believing in him as our Savior.

Now it says that Christ was the **Author** or Originator of this faith that we are to live by. **He began it, he lived by it himself and he brought it to completion.** Now the concept of living by faith wasn't new to the people of God. They lived by faith before the flood and after the flood. This new kind of faith that Christ initiated is the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Word/BD under the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is a spiritual dynamic that only exists for Church Age believers.

There are several references in the Bible to faith in Christ that could be translated as the faith of Christ, such as, “*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” Galatians 2:16 “*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.*” Galatians 2:20 “*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*” Galatians 3:22 “*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*” Romans 3:22 “*In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*” Ephesians 3:12 “*And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*” Philippians 3:12

There is some debate as to whether these passages refer to faith in Christ, or the faith of Christ, but in general Greek usage the genitive, when used with faith is subjective, that is, the faith of someone. If the idea of faith in someone is to be emphasized, the objective genitive, then often the prepositions eis, en, peri, or sometimes tini are used.

Hebert said that the genitive after pistis is usually subjective, not objective. Kittel argued in 1906 that Paul used the subjective genitive in Romans 3:3, the “*faith of God*”, την πιστιν του θεου, and with the exact same construct in Romans 4:16, “*the faith of Abraham*”, εκ πιστεως αβρααμ. He said that he would be confusing his readers unless he intends the same grammatical construction in Romans 3:22.

Goodenough, in a posthumous essay, held that **the faith of Jesus closely paralleled the faith of**

Abraham, in that, *the faith of Christ* was Christ trusting the Father in the matter of his death, that death would not be the end for him, but that the Father would keep his promise to him and raise him from the dead. Acts 2:26,27

There is no case of *pistis* with an objective genitive cited in the 9th edition of Liddell and Scott. No case of *pistis* with the objective genitive in the Septuagint. The objective genitive is usually used with *eis, en, peri, tini*, or sometimes with the accusative object. Howard claims that *pistis* followed by the genitive of a person or a personal pronoun occurs 24 times in the NT, not counting the times where *pistis Christou* and its equivalents appear, and that in all 24 cases the phrase refers to the faith of the person, never faith in the person. So when we take the subjective sense of the faith of Jesus Christ in Galatians 2:16 it all makes sense.

But all arguments that might arise by men for or against the idea of Christ's faith are quickly and completely dismissed when we read of his own words on the cross. *"Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* Acts 2:26, 27

These words are the expression of the faith of Jesus Christ as he was hanging there on the cross. He had studied these passages in the Scriptures when he was a young man and believed them! And having believed them, and believed they applied to him, they became a part of his soul that he was now applying to the crucible of testing that he was going through on the cross. We have Christ's faith in the Father's plan, the Father's provision and in the Father's power in the intake of the Word and faith in its application while on the cross.

In Psalm 22:5 we see once again that Christ trusted the Father, *"They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they **trusted** in thee, and were not confounded."* And again in Psalm 22:8, *"He **trusted** on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."* John 18:11 brings out Christ's faith and trust in the Father's will and plan, *"Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"* Christ was not only obedient to the Father, he trusted him as these passages show.

Jesus Christ lived his life by faith, faith in the Father's will and **plan**, faith in the **power** of the Father and faith in the Father's **provisions** for his life. He believed the Father's promises; and he followed the Father's will for his life by faith all the way to the cross where his faith in the Word sustained him and by it gave him and us the victory! **And it is this same faith that he originated and brought to perfection that he gave to all Church Age believers to live by!**

Christ was indeed our Pioneer and Trailblazer; he began our brand of faith and he brought it to perfection. And what makes this faith so different than the other concepts of faith? **It is faith in God as we would have faith in a father.** It is faith in our heavenly Father **and he truly is our Father because he created our human spirits!**

Now Christ had created the earth, as well as man, and he had been here before many times, but not as a man. He had come from heaven to earth and back to heaven again as deity, and while here on earth he took the form of a man, but now he would have to go back to heaven as a man. How would this work out? This was going to be something all together new for him.

Deity comes from heaven to earth and deity goes from earth back to heaven. But now deity is going to

become a man forever, **now how is he going to get back to heaven as a man?** This is where the Father's plan comes in. It's one thing to get him here, but it's another thing to get him back, because he's going to be different now – a man! And this is where Christ's faith comes in, faith in the Father's plan to get him back to heaven. And not only to get him back, but to blaze a trail of faith for the main body to follow, that main body of believers in Christ who are going to the city he has prepared for them.

Then the passage goes on to say, “*But if any man draw back*” - και εαν υποστειληται. Ean plus the subjunctive mood of *hupostello* introduces a third class condition of *if*. If something is true, maybe it is, maybe it isn't, but if it is true, then something else will occur. “*And if he shrinks back*”. The just will live by faith, now maybe they will and maybe they won't, and if he doesn't, then my soul will have no pleasure in him. This isn't looking at the *iffiness* as to whether Christ would live by faith, but at the aspect of the Father being displeased over the concept of unbelief.

I don't think that most Christians are aware of Christ's work on earth outside the cross. They are all aware, somewhat, of Christ's atoning work on the cross, (even if they don't understand or recognize how completely it dealt with their sins), but there was that aspect of Christ's work that dealt with fully **keeping the Law of God**, and there was also that aspect of **the faith that Christ lived by!** And as the Father would not be pleased with him, if he did not keep all the Law, neither would he have been pleased with him if he had wavered in faith!

To **shrink back**, *hupostello*, meant to withdraw, to shrink back, to retreat, to not go on your assignment, to not perform your duty. In a military application of an **army** out on the battlefield it meant to withdraw from the battle, to retreat, to stop fighting, to leave the scene of the battle.

In a **naval** application it meant to lower or strike the sails, to withdraw from the battle, to slacken the course, to come to a stop, as well as to break away from the contest, to surrender. **Instead of sailing into harm's way to engage the enemy, the ship sails off in another direction. Or, if one is already engaged in the battle, then it meant to break off and turn away from the fight. And it also meant to surrender.**

At sea, sails are generally not lowered for any reason, even in a storm some sails have to be left up to have forward motion to provide steerage. Without forward motion the ship will flounder and capsize. The only time that a ship's sails are lowered is when it is finally in port and is safely anchored inside the breakwater.

In a **naval** application *hupostello* spoke of a situation where two or more combat vessels are fighting each other and one vessel leaves the battle; it withdraws from the conflict. This speaks of one who has had enough and no longer wants to fight, so he leaves the scene of the battle. And in another application, when the ship lowered his sails, it said that the captain had given up; he is now surrendering. The ship is comes to a stop, (our forward faith momentum has stopped), the enemy ship pulls up alongside, and it now boards the vessel taking the captain and his crew as prisoners.

By way of reference to application, this is referring to believers in Christ who turn away from sticking with Bible Doctrine, grace and faith living in the angelic conflict to go back into the world system. It speaks of the AWOL believer or the deserter. Like Demas who forsook Paul, “*For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica;*” 2 Timothy 4:10a

In the application for the individual Christian it speaks of our warfare in the angelic conflict in its many aspects. We are the captains of our own spiritual *vessels*. If we are married, then the husband is the

captain of his own family *vessel*. And in the local church the Pastor-Teacher is the captain of the church *vessel*. He actually carries the present day naval rank of Captain or Commander. When a believer joins a local church, what they are doing in effect is *coming on board* his vessel as part of the crew.

In this angelic conflict we, individually, are like ships of war out at sea, each on board our own vessel, each under orders from the fleet, each believer being a crewman aboard his church vessel, each having a particular role to play at sea in God's overall strategy. **Christ** is the Admiral of the entire navy, the **Apostles** were admirals over certain fleets, like our Navy's 6th fleet, 7th fleet, 4th fleet, etc., speaking of certain geographical areas on the globe, and the **Pastor-Teachers**, with their rank of Commander or Captain, serving as the captains of their own ships of their own local church.

As in the naval metaphor, each aspect speaks of a parallel aspect in the spiritual realm of the angelic conflict; the **sails** speak of the believer's faith; the **helm and rudder** speaks of the volitional decisions he makes; the **galley and ship's stores** speaks of the grace provisions that God has supplied for the journey. All the food necessary to sustain captain and crew are already on board ship; the **weapons** needed to engage and defeat the enemy are already in the armory; the **compass** is our orientation to God's grace and his plan, which is always oriented to magnetic north, and *Yahweh* is the God of the north; the **charts** are God's Word; the **course** we head on is God's will and plan for our lives; the **wind** refers to the Holy Spirit giving us his power as it is transmitted to us through the sails of faith; the **hull and vessel** in its entirety, (being made of the finest material), speaks of the new man, which can handle any sea and any storm at sea; our **orders** are to sail to the next faith/grace objective.

There are other things that God has provided for all ship's crew and that is things such as medicine, doctors, dentists, chaplains, exercise rooms, entertainment, food for our nutrition, other crewmen to visit with, and even a ship's store for some luxury items! God has already provided for us everything that we will need for our journey here on the *high seas* of this world system, not only to sustain us, but for us to fight in the angelic war.

So here we are out at sea, our hulls laden with food and ammunition stores, we've cast off the lines, we've weighed the anchors, we've set our sails of faith and the wind has caught our sails and now we are sailing off into the high seas. And out at sea we open up our orders to find that God wants us to sail to the next faith objective in his will for our lives. Perhaps it's a ministry, or to go into business, or attend school, a job, marriage, a move to a new town, growth, service, etc.. And if our orders are to "*sail into harm's way*" in the angelic conflict, then Christ will be there to lead the fleet. Sometimes we have to defend when attacked; sometimes we have to "*sail into harm's way*".

We can put our next destination as an island out at sea, or our orders could be to just sail to a certain place in the ocean and wait there for a certain time and purpose. **Sometimes in life we have to be in a certain place, and at a certain time, and it is then and there when God will show us what he wants us to do next in our lives.**

Maybe out at sea the orders are to team up with another ship. This is like going to a certain place where you will meet up with your new mate, or a ministry, etc.. To accomplish this we will have to check our charts and orders to find that we will have to sail in a certain heading to get there. So we reach our objective, accomplish what it is that we are supposed to do there, then move on to the next one. And we keep doing this all our lives until we reach our final destination - the Port of Heaven!

Our orders direct us to the next objective. Each new place that we arrive at will be somewhat different than the old one, and what we will be doing will differ somewhat from what we did at the old objective.

Our orders will also include what God wants us to do when we get there. When we began our voyage as Christians, God did not tell us what our orders were on that day we were saved as to where we will be, what we will do, etc., these things will be revealed to us by the Holy Spirit once underway in our lives. But we have to get underway.

We may have only been given orders to get underway at a certain time and set a certain course; the rest of our orders are sealed only to be opened up **while** underway in the plan of God. Once we get out at sea, and are at a certain place and at a certain time, then we open up the next part of our orders to find out what God wants us to do next. **God's will for our lives is revealed to us day by day in his *Plan of the Day* as we are underway in his will.**

But there's something else to keep in mind, and that is as we are sailing from one grace object in God's will for our lives to the next **we will encounter the *enemy at sea***. And because we fly the home colors of our king and nation, we can be sure the enemy will engage us in battle! This is where one will really appreciate the quality of the ship, weapons and provisions that our king has issued us. And this is where we will have to rigidly follow the battle protocol for engaging the enemy, if we want to be victorious. By following Christ's battle plan, (applying Bible Doctrine), we will gain the victory that day, but we cannot rest on our laurels for there will be other days, other ships and other battles to fight in the service of our God and king. Then one day we sail off to our home port in heaven.

Another thing that **we will encounter at sea are the *storms, the trials of life***, some of them so severe that we think our hulls will be crushed and the ship swamped. But never fear! Because our king has issued us ships whose hulls are so strong, that they can stand up to any *storm in life*, that is, any trial in life that we will go through! We just have to keep steering the ship into the wind, **to face the storm**, so that we don't capsize. This is totally focusing on faith in the Word when going through a trial, **and we have to face the trial, not run from it!**

Sometimes the storms of life are so severe and so long, it's all we can do to stay afloat and survive. Our concern, then, is not maintaining the heading to our next destination that we were on, but heading into the wind just to ***weather the storm*** and stay afloat. Some churches, people and Pastors are really battered by the storms of the angelic conflict. Often a ship will be blown miles off course after the storm. This is understandable and acceptable, because at least **the captain and crew are still alive and the ship is still afloat, seaworthy and ready to do battle again.**

Now the passage says, "*Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*", telling us that God will not be pleased if any believer shrinks back, *hupostello*, from the life of faith. He also makes this very clear in Hebrews 11:6, "*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.*"

We must keep pressing forward by faith in the will and plan of God for our lives. Perseverance is that aspect of the soul where we have forward momentum while going through a trial. We are able to have forward momentum as we are strengthened by faith in the Word of God. And so the Messiah did not shrink back from the Father's plan for his life. "*For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.*" Isa. 50:7

AA. Faith inspired by *agape*.

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which

worketh by love.” Galatians 5:6 εν γαρ χριστω ιησου ουτε περιτομη τι ισχυει ουτε ακροβυστια αλλα πιστις δι αγαπης ενεργουμενη.

We want to note the word **availeth**, *ischuo*, which speaks of having the power or strength to meet a situation, endure it and overcome it in victory. Now Paul says that neither circumcision, or uncircumcision, things done to the flesh, do not have the power to accomplish anything spiritual. The only thing is **faith** working by *agape* love.

This verse is telling us what faith can do; it's telling us about the power found in faith, (or how faith accesses the power of God); it's telling us about how faith inspires us in our souls, and it's also telling us where faith comes from. And it's found in the expression, “*but faith which worketh by love*”, *alla pistis di'agapes energoumene*. Now on the surface this may not seem very important, but when one goes back to the ideas found connected with the word, *energeo*, it opens up a whole new world.

The word used here, *energeo* or *energeia*, was a word connected to the cosmic powers in the Greek mind. Now in their minds the cosmic powers could be either good or bad. But before we get into that, perhaps we need to set some sort of backdrop to help us in our understanding. To begin with, they regarded the *daimones*, (demons, cosmic powers), as not being necessarily bad. Actually, they used the term *daimones* to refer to a race of superior beings who came to earth from far away galaxies to impart knowledge to man.

Now when one of these cosmic powers imparted useful knowledge to someone, that impartation of knowledge was what *energeo* was about. The word we would use today would be **inspired**. They were inspired with an idea. Of course we have been seeing this go on for thousands of years with the demons inspiring mankind with their evil ideas. We might as well bring in the idea behind the word genius. When one of these *daimones*, who were also called genii, inspired someone with an idea, then that person was said to be a genius because he had a genii! Many of the world system's leaders were said to have a genii!

But getting back to our story, the key idea that we want to take away from this is that *energeo* is talking about being inspired with an idea or a concept. The demons inspired the ancient Greeks, (and people today), with their ideas. **And the Christian today, who is filled with the Holy Spirit will be inspired with faith ideas.** “*But faith which worketh by*, or, is inspired by, *agape love*”, *alla pistis di'agapes energoumene*. Faith in our souls is activated by means of *agape*.

This tells us that the spiritual mental attitude of *agape*, which is brought about by the filling of the Holy Spirit, is the instrumental agency by which we have faith; it is the means by which we are inspired with faith and faith ideas! The Christian, who is under the teaching of the Word of God, and living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, whose mind is dominated by *agape* love mental attitude and God's Word **will be inspired with faith and that faith will create in our minds faith ideas!**

But what is an idea? It is a thought or conception that potentially, or actually, exists in the mind as a product of mental activity. The mind-set of faith will lead us to come up with ideas in our minds, all sorts of ideas, and **it will also establish the mind-set that this is possible**, that this can come to be!

When God sent the twelve spies into the land of Canaan to spy it out, two of them came back and said, we can do this! But the other ten came back, after looking at the same thing, and said, it can't be done! The idea that the two had in their minds was that they could conquer the land, just as God had promised

to them. While the ten said that it can't be done, not even with God's help! Their excuse was because the giants were in the land. The two had faith; the ten had no faith.

And the reason why the two had faith is because they believed the Word of God! They believed that God couldn't and wouldn't lie, and that he had the power to do whatever he said he would do, so they could trust him. They were convinced by the Word of God. And for us to have it today we have to be convinced by the Word of God. For it is out of the Word that we have faith! *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* Romans 10:17 The preposition ek, used with hearing the Word of God, tells us that the origin of faith is from the Word of God. So what we need to do is turn our souls in total concentration on what the Word of God is telling us, especially concerning this matter of faith, then a miraculous thing will happen. **We will find our minds change from being negative and unbelieving to one of faith and hope!**

BB. Faith shields us.

“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 concept of shielding was well known in the ancient world, as it is today. The shield acted as a barrier against the arrows, spears, swords, even the bodies of enemy combatants. One can use his body to act as a shield to protect those he loves, his wife, children, friends and loved ones from those who wish to harm them. Any time there is something valued to be protected the idea of a shield comes into play, whether in protecting the quarterback or runner in football, or placing an electromagnetic shield over the theater of war on the battlefield. The concept of **shielding** is originally behind the word *huper*, where the Lord's action of dying on the cross for our sins shielded us from the judicial wrath of the Father. When the Lord placed his body on the cross to bear the Father's wrath for our sins, he was using his body as a shield to protect us from the righteous blows of the Father. The wrath of God we had coming he took on himself.

The shield of faith here refers to the believer's faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word. It refers to living in the spiritual life dynamic, where the Christian lives by faith in the Word of God in the filling of the Holy Spirit. And it is as we exercise our faith in the Word of God a barrier is created to protect our precious souls to keep them from being harmed by Satan. One of the most terrifying weapons in those days was when the enemy would fire flaming arrows at them. It was bad enough to have thousands of arrows flying at your position, but to have them ablaze became a much more serious threat. The arrows, or fiery darts, that Satan shoots at us are not fiery in the sense of being on fire, but **burning**. **The burning here refers to the burning of the venom of the cobra, the devil's symbol, and refers to the bitterness of Satan and his demons making penetration into our souls, thus inflaming us with anger.** Faith in the Word protects us from that.

CC. Faith has activity.

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;” 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - υμων του εργου της πιστεως

The word for **work**, *ergos*, refers to any form of activity. Faith in the Word of God may be the inner mental dynamic, but action is all that which is outside the inner mental dynamic. It encompasses

speaking, acting, walking, doing, etc.. So we have faith is the inner motivator that leads us to action.

Abel's faith in what God had said about a sacrifice was behind him offering the proper sacrifice to God. “*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.*” Hebrews 11:4

Noah's faith in what God had said about a coming flood motivated him to build an ark. “*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.*” Hebrews 11:7

Abraham's faith concerning what God had told him about a certain land was the cause behind him leaving his home country, even his family, to go to a place he had never seen. “*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.*” Hebrews 11:8

By faith **Isaac** blessed Jacob and Esau. “*By faith **Isaac blessed** Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*” Hebrews 11:20

By faith **Jacob** blessed both the sons of Joseph. “*By faith **Jacob**, when he was a dying, **blessed** both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.*” Hebrews 11:20

By faith **Joseph** gave instructions concerning his earthly remains after he died. “*By faith **Joseph**, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and **gave commandment** concerning his bones.*” Hebrews 11:22

By faith **Moses' parents** hid him for three months. “*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.*” Hebrews 11:23 A clear example of God's people who, by faith in God, put the Word of God higher than the “laws” of human authorities.

It was **Moses'** faith that motivated him to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, to choose to be identified with the people of God, to forsake Egypt, to keep the Passover. “*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; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he **forsook** Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith **he kept the passover**, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.*” Hebrews 11:24-28

By faith the **people of God** walked through where the Red Sea had been and came out the other side victorious over Pharaoh and his army! “*By **faith** they **passed through the Red sea** as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*” Hebrews 11:29 Their faith motivated them to the action of walking.

Here we see faith motivating the people of God to one form of action or another. Whether **offering**, or **building**, or **journeying** to a foreign land, or **blessing** someone, or **giving instructions**, or **disobeying civil authorities**, or **choosing** one people and life instead of another people and life, or **walking**

forward into what would seem an impossible situation!

Even the Apostle **Paul** said that it was his faith in Christ that motivated him to speak the Word about Christ. *“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;**”* 2 Corinthians 4:13

It is the **unbeliever's** faith in Christ that motivates him to call out to the Lord. *“For whosoever shall **call upon the name of the Lord** shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not **believed?** and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”* Romans 10:13,14

DD. Faith can and is to grow.

*“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith **groweth** exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;”* 2 Thessalonians 1:3

The word for **grow** here is *huperauxano*, which looks at the idea of natural growth, such as in people, plant and animals. With *huper* prefixed to it, it looks at the idea of fast or abundant growth. Which tells us something about faith. The faith that has been measured out to us by God at the moment of our salvation is not just a static thing, but is to keep on growing and getting stronger, so that it will come to the place of completion.

If we looked at **plants**, we would take this from the time that the seed was planted in the ground, it takes root, the stalk shoots up, then one day it starts to bear fruit. Or, if we take **people**, the seed was planted in the mother's womb, the child is born, its bones grow, it starts to develop muscles, and then day it becomes an adult who will be productive in life.

We also can look at this from the perspective that faith in God and his Word is just a small thread, one that we think can so easily be broken – like a spider's web. Then another **strand** is added to it and it becomes a little stronger. And then more and more strands are added to it until it gets to the place that it is a strong rope.

Or we can look at it from the standpoint of **muscles**. All of our muscles start out pretty small and weak. But it is through the constant exercising of them, and by trying to lift more weights, that we find our muscles get bigger and bigger and we get stronger and stronger. And so it is with faith. The more we use it, the more we exercise our faith, the stronger our faith becomes! This is why God is constantly placing us in various kinds of trials. He does this so we can have the opportunity to exercise our faith! And when we finally trust him in one trial, we pass our test and move on to the next one and one day finally arrive at the place where our faith is completed.

EE. Faith and endurance.

“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” Hebrews 6:12 - ινα μη νωθροι γενησθε μιμηται δε των δια **πιστεως** και μακροθυμιας κληρονομουντων τας επαγγελιας.

There are many things that God has promised his people in their temporal existence here on earth. These things we refer to as the blessings of God. And, as we have seen before, these blessings come to

us out of his grace and are appropriated by faith. Much of the Bible is a history of God's men and women who have lived here on earth and enjoyed the wonderful things that God has done for them out of his grace. Things he has done for their souls, for their families, for their physical health, areas of job prosperity and the opportunities to serve him.

Throughout the Bible the Lord tells us to seek his face, to call on him and he will bless us. He instructs us on how to live our lives in such a manner that is pleasing to him so that he might bless us. These are all things that he has promised to us. And a promise of God is the most certain thing on earth. So all we have to do is believe his promises.

And there's something else in this passage and that is **endurance**. Endurance deals with the believer's forward momentum as he moves through his trials toward the goal of carrying off the promises of God. The believer can't give up in this matter. We must believe that God will come through in what he has promised. And this gets back to living our lives based upon **the faithfulness of God**. God is faithful to his Word; he is faithful to what he has promised; and he is faithful to his covenant with us.

FF. The full assurance of faith.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

The word for **full assurance** is *plerophoria*, which has the idea of being filled up with something. What is it that we are to be filled to the top with? **Faith!** When we talk about faith at this level, we are looking at the idea of being totally confident before God. Confidence has no doubts whatsoever, so that when we approach the throne of God, we are confident that he will hear our prayers.

In fact, confidence in God will govern our entire existence here on earth. We are confident that God has a plan for our lives, that our lives are not left up to chance, nor left up to our flighty wills. We are confident that God will protect us and that he will provide for us. We are confident in the omnipotence of God's power. We are confident in God keeping the promises he has made to us, because he cannot lie and he has the power and determination to keep his them regardless of any and all opposition to them. And we are confident in the process that God chooses to perfect us, even though we might not understand it at the time.

And how do we get this full assurance of faith? We get it through the consistent intake of the teaching of his Word! It is as we focus our thinking on Bible doctrine that our faith grows and grows. And it is as we meditate on the faithfulness of God that our faith in him becomes stronger. In fact some translations have Habakkuk 2:4, “*The just shall live by his faith*”, as, “*The just shall live by **his faithfulness***”, referring to God. This was the translation in the Geneva Bible that launched the Reformation.

GG. Faith is the substance.

*“Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 - εστιν δε πιστις ελπιζομενων **υποστασις** πραγματων ελεγχος ου βλεπομενων.*

To begin with we need to see once again that faith always has to have an object and for us the object always has to be the Word of God. So we have the Word of God, or **the Bible doctrine that we have believed**, is the **substance** of things hoped for.

Now some translations have *hupostasis* translated as *substance*, other translations as *assurance*. We could also put in the idea of confidence for that is involved as well. *Hupostasis* was the word used along with the idea of a **title deed**. A man buys a piece of property, money exchanges hands, but what assurance does he have that the property is his? Really none. Suppose family members challenged him in court later on claiming that he never bought it at all! This is where the title deed comes in. It is a legal document that will stand up in court verifying that the man now owns the property. It gives him **assurance**.

The same idea would go for buying merchandise, or an animal, and somebody, maybe even the owner could come along and say that he stole it! But if he had a bill of sale, he could prove that the animal was legally his now, thus giving him **assurance**.

The same thing could be said for inheriting property in another area. The lawyer doesn't merely say that you now own twenty acres in another town he has the title deed to it with your name on it. And even though you have not taken possession of it, even though you have never even seen it, and even though squatters may be living on it claiming that the property is theirs, you know it is yours because you have the title deed to it and the authorities will uphold your legal claim.

So we have **the Bible doctrine that we have believed becomes the assurance and guarantee of the things hoped for**. Now when we look at **hope**, the present passive participle of *elpizo*, we are talking about something that is going to happen in the future. It is not unreal, it is only unrealized. There is the **subjective** side of hope, where the believer has the confident expectation that something good is going to happen to him in the future, such as, a prayer being answered. And then there is the **objective** side of hope where something good is going to happen to us in the future, because God is going to do it for us, even though we may not know it and even though we may not be believing it at that particular time, as the case was with Job in all his suffering.

There is a judicial side to *elenkos* for it could also refer to evidence that would stand up in a court of law, such as, a title deed. So what's it's telling us is that the doctrine that we have believed, the promises of God that we have believed, the gospel of Christ that we have believed is evidence of the fact that we will receive what God has promised us.

We start with the fact that God loves us and wants to bless us. Then we go to the matter of, on what basis does God bless people? On their works? No. On their personal morality? No. On their personality? No. On their keeping of his Law? No. God only blesses his children on the basis of his grace! And because it is by grace, then it also has to be by faith. So whenever we believe God's promises, or his offer of salvation through faith in Christ, then we have the proof that we will receive from him what we are hoping for at some time in the future.

HH. We comprehend spiritual truths by faith.

*“Through faith we **understand** that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”* Hebrews 11:3 - πισται νοουμεν κατηρτισθαι τους αιωνας ρηματι θεου εις το μη εκ φαινομενων τα βλεπομενα γεγονεναι.

This verse tells us that it was God who created the heavens and earth, but it also tells us that we arrive at the perception of this truth, and all other spiritual truths, only by faith not by empirical evidence. There are many Christians out there trying to prove that God created the earth by the use of empirical

evidence, but what they don't see is that there is only spiritual validity in the sphere of faith. Even if people demand to have the creation account proven to them, one still must accept by faith that God created the heavens and the earth.

There are three modes of perception by which one can know what is true. **Empiricism**, where knowledge of what is true is derived from the five senses; sight, sound, taste, smell and touch. **Rationalism**, where knowledge of what is true and real is derived by the use of the mind. **Pisticism**, where knowledge of what is true is gained by the exercise of faith! And for Christians our faith is placed in the Word of God and the many doctrines that it teaches.

A man stands atop a precipice wanting to cross over to the other side of a gorge that has a drop of a thousand feet. The only thing that is there is a rickety old rope bridge that connects the two sides. The question is, the truth he wants to know is, how does he know if it's safe to go across? He uses his eyes to gauge the thickness of the ropes, how secure they are tied, the slat boards, the anchor posts securing the bridge and gives it a good shake. Empiricism and rationalism working together to derive the truth. His mind mulls it over, but still he is not sure and doesn't want to go out in the middle to check it out. All of a sudden there is an old man standing on the other side. So he asks him, how did you get over there? To which the old man replied, I walked over the bridge! He asks, so it's safe to walk across then? To which the old man replied, yes, we do it all the time. So by faith he believes the old man's words and walks across.

To be able to comprehend spiritual truths the individual, first, must be a believer in Jesus Christ where he now has a new nature, which is spiritual in essence, and, then, there must be the exercising of faith. *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* 1 Corinthians 2:14

Having said that, then one needs to understand that believers in Christ have two natures, one that is the flesh and the other the spirit, which God created in him at salvation. If we are operating in our flesh nature, then we will not be able to comprehend spiritual truths. So we have to be operating in our new natures and to do that we must confess our known sins to God to receive the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Now that we are filled with the Holy Spirit we will then have to be exercising faith toward the teaching of Bible Doctrine. And it is there, as faith metabolizes the Word of God, that the believer will be able to comprehend the spiritual truths that lie within it. Many believers fail to do this, or refuse to do this. They either want something proven to them, or they want to see some form of empirical evidence, or they approach it from a purely academic point of view. What they fail to see is that faith levels the playing field. It takes all merit away from people and their mental or academic abilities and puts it solely upon God and his Word, where it should be.

II. Without faith, impossible to please 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.”* Hebrews 11:6 - χωρίς δε πιστεως αδυνατον ευαρεστησαι πιστευσαι γαρ δει τον προσερχομενον τω θεω οτι εστιν και τοις εκζητουσιν αυτον μισθαποδοτης γινεται.

Now when it talks about faith, remember that it is talking about **faith in God and his Word**! Biblical faith must always have God and his Word as the object of our faith. In that way faith is meritless for the merit lies in the object of faith - God and his Word.

The word for **without** is *choris* and it means apart from something. Used in many ways, but one is the idea of a main ingredient, such as the main ingredient in a recipe, without which you do not have the entree. Oysters Rockefeller without the oysters it is not Oysters Rockefeller. Apart from faith in the Word of God - impossible to please God.

In every believer in Jesus Christ is the desire to please God, and this due to the act of regeneration by the Holy Spirit at salvation. But some try to please God out of their own works, legalism, morality, following along in the religious program of their church, by being good, etc.. But there is only one way that we can please God and that is **through faith in his Word!**

Just as there is only one way we can worship God and that is through the Holy Spirit and the truth! “*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must worship him in spirit and in truth.***” John 4:24 A fact that is woefully lacking in most churches today, who think that through their programs, entertainment, singing, religious activities, and sometimes totally bizarre behavior they are worshiping God. But if their assembling is not gathered around the teaching of his Word – **they are not!**

JJ. Faith empowered 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.*” Hebrews 11:11 - πιστει και αυτη σαρρα δυναμιν εις καταβολην σπερματος ελαβεν και παρα καιρον ηλικιας ετεκεν επει **πιστον** ηγησατο τον επαγγειλαμενον.

God had made a promise to give Abraham a son, but he also stated that the son would come through Sarah. So what this means is that Sarah as well would have to be empowered to conceive and carry a child, just as Abraham would have to be empowered to perform in the masculine way. Sarah would not only have to be able to lay down eggs once again, but she would also have to be strengthened physically so she could bear the child for nine months and then deliver it!

To **conceive** is *katabole*, the word for laying down a foundation, so **God had to so strengthen her in every way for the rigors that lie ahead in bearing the child**. This strengthening she received from God, for she no longer possessed the strength in her own flesh to do so. And she received this strength by the exercising of faith in the promise of God. But what was it about God that gave her the confidence to believe him? He made had made the promise about a son, but what was it that enabled her to fully trust him? It was in his **faithfulness!** Abraham looked at the **power** of God to perform what he promised to do. But Sarah looked at the **faithfulness** of God in carrying out his promise.

KK. Rich in faith.

“*Hearken, my beloved brethren, 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 - ακουσατε αδελφοι μου αγαπητοι ουχ ο θεος εξελεξατο τους πτωχους του κοσμου τουτου πλουσιους εν πιστει και κληρονομους της βασιλειας ης επηγγειλατο τοις αγαπωσιν αυτων.

Two ideas are contrasted here, the **rich**, *plousios*, and the **poor**, *ptochos*. *Plousios* meant to have an abundance of something, in this case money. While *ptochos* meant that one not only did not have money, but that they were often forced to beg for their food and other necessities. It also had the ideas

of being poor, miserable, beggarly, without power, etc..

And, as the nature of man is, the **rich**, because they have money, put their faith and trust in money. And the more they had the better it was for them. Their faith and security was in the abundance of money and things they possessed, but not in the Lord.

The **poor** on the other hand, because they had no money, had nothing to place their faith in as the rich. To them the only way that they could get any money was to be dependent on other people to give it to them, but there was no way they could count on that! So they had to have something else going for them and that was their faith! They had the faith that somehow the money would come in and they would get by!

LL. Faith has activity.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” James 2:14 “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” James 2:17 “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” James 2:18 “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” James 2:20 “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” James 2:22 “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” James 2:26

Obviously James makes a clear case for the relationship that exists between faith and works, or faith and activity, for the word for **works** is *ergos* and refers to any form of activity. Faith is the mental attitude that motivates one toward an action. On the other hand, doubt would be the mental attitude that prevents us from acting in some area.

The unbeliever **calls** upon the name of the Lord as the result of **believing** on him. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not **believed**?” Romans 10:13;14a It was his faith in Christ that motivated him to call on the Lord.*

Faith motivated Abel to the action of **offering** the proper sacrifice. *“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.” Hebrews 11:4*

Noah's **faith** in the Word of God concerning the impending destruction of the world motivated him to **build** an ark. *“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.” Hebrews 11:7*

When God called Abraham out to go to a different country he **believed** the Lord and he acted on that faith by **going!** *“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.” Hebrews 11:8 By **faith** Abraham also **offered** up 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,” Hebrews 11:17**

By **faith** Moses' parents **hid** him for three months. *“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.” Hebrews 11:23*

By **faith** Moses refused to be **called** the son of Pharaoh's daughter and he **chose** to be identified with the Israelites and their suffering. “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;” Hebrews 11:24,25 Plus the forsaking of the nation of Egypt and the keeping of the Passover.

Wherever we find the concept of faith, that is, believing the promises of God, we will always find the concept of some form of action, either at that time, or somewhere later on. Somewhere, some place, if there is faith in that believer's soul, then that faith will motivate them to some form of action.

Even Paul said that it was his **faith**, (and the others), that motivated them to **communicate** the Word of God. “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;” 2 Corinthians 4:13 Which was taken out of the OT, “I **believed**, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:” Psalms 116:10

MM. The prayer of faith.

“And the **prayer of faith** shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” James 5:15 - και η ευχη της πιστεως σωσει τον καμνοντα και εγερει αυτον ο κυριος καν αμαρτιας η πεποιηκως αφεθησεται αυτω.

When we look at faith in reference to the subjective genitive and the objective genitive; the objective genitive looks at **what we believe**, the Word, God, his promises, etc., while the subjective genitive looks at the **act of believing**.

So what this does is tell us something about the nature and character of our prayers, **that there is to be faith in them when we pray!** Their character should be that when we pray to God with our requests, we should be believing that he will grant them. In the subjective genitive we have a faith-prayer, or faith in the prayer, or believing while we're praying.

Christ told the disciples not to pray with “*vain-babblings*”, which was just mechanically repeating the prayer over and over, like Catholics do with the rosary. The rosary, (prayer beads), actually began in ancient Babylon and is still utilized today by not only Catholics, but Muslims and people in the eastern religions.

In the passage it really isn't “*the prayer offered in faith*”, but “*the prayer of the faith*”, which really draws our attention to the character of our prayers; they are to be faith-prayers, **prayers where we actually believe that we will get what we have asked God for!** “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, **believing**, ye shall receive.” Matthew 21:22

Faith is so important, not because it has any power in it to do anything, **but because it opens up the channel by which the power of God is made available to us in its operation.** Faith is not a feeling; and looking for some kind of a feeling when looking for faith is misleading. **It is believing that you will have what you have asked for; it's like believing that you already have it!**

There's also an assumption being made here. The elders are being called because **it's assumed that they are stronger in their faith**, both individually and collectively. Which also implies that the men who hold leadership positions in the church are to be stronger in faith than the others. It isn't about legalism, judgmentalism, tabooism, self-righteousness and things that are so prevalent today- but faith!

Are they actively living by faith in their lives? Do they believe when they pray? Does God answer their prayers? These are the kind of believers you want praying for you.

The **prayer of the faith** has the definite article *the* with faith telling us that this refers to the Word of God that we have learned, understood and believed. Now that we know what the Word states or teaches, and now that we have believed it, **it is a part of our souls and the next and natural expression of it is to pray!** But we're to pray to God **believing** that we will receive what we have believed and asked God for and that is *the prayer of faith*.

NN. Resisting Satan 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 “Whom resist stedfast in the **faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” 1 Peter 5:9*

Satan is the most powerful and crafty created being in the universe. There is not one believer that has been able to stand up against him in his own strength. If we are to be able stand against victoriously, then it must not be in **our** strength, but in the strength that God provides. And the grace provision that God has supplied to all believers in Christ is **faith!**

But when we talk about faith again, remember, it is faith in the Lord, faith in the doctrines and promises of the Word of God and faith in the Father. Faith never stands by itself; it must always have an object and that object is and has to be – God! There is no merit in faith. The merit comes from the one whom we are placing our faith in! So when we take our stand against the devil in faith in God, we are depending upon the strength of God! When we place our faith in the Word of God, we are still placing our faith in God for they are **his** Words!

When Christ was hanging there on the cross, he could have called on the Father to send his legions of angels to save him from the cross, but he didn't! Instead he relied on the Father's promise to raise him from the dead. *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” Matthew 26:53*

When Peter was about to be tested, (and the others), by Satan to see if he really belonged to the Lord, the Lord prayed that his faith would not fail. *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” Luke 22:31*

Paul brings out what faith does for us, when we are attacked by Satan or one of his demons, and that is it quenches the fiery darts of the devil. These fiery darts actually refer to the idea of **burning** and speaks of the burning of bitterness. When the cobra strikes, and the cobra is one of the metaphors for Satan, it injects its venom which burns when it enters the body. The venom also is a toxic poison that will spread and infect the entire body and often results in death. And so does the poison of bitterness spread throughout our souls.

The presence of Satan, (or one of his demons), when he comes up into the space of a believer in Christ, will manifest itself in one of several ways, it could be a feeling of intense jealousy, or influencing one to be lifted up in pride, lusts of various kinds, overwhelming depression and despondency, but one of the main emotions that he directs at us and can just consume the believer's soul is an overwhelming emotion of **bitterness and intense anger!**

Anger is an emotion and as an emotions it is energy and this energy is radiated outward into the vicinity

of those around us. **It can also be directed at someone!** You're in a room full of people and everyone is getting along fine with each other. Then someone, who is very angry, walks into the room. Instantly you can “feel” their anger, for it is radiated around the room. And it won't be long before their anger has stimulated other people in the room and they become angry. The radiated energy of anger by the one is “felt” by other people, or some of them, and the next thing you know they are experiencing the same anger themselves.

Now take that idea of an angry person radiating their anger in the room to one where they come over to you **and direct their anger at you!** We've all experienced this at one time or another in our lives and it's very uncomfortable. Now, other than the normal fight or flight response to the anger they have directed at you, people will generally react in anger themselves, sometimes right at the moment, other times later on when they go home, where they will take out on those around them and be stewing in anger and bitterness for days, weeks, months and longer!

Now take all of that and kick it up to the level of the most powerful created being in the universe, who is not just angry, but filled with great rage **and this angry powerful being is coming at you and directing his anger at you!** And how much more so upon being kicked out of heaven during the middle of the Tribulation and having to come down to earth! *“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, (great rage) because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Revelation 12:12*

Now how are we going to stand against all that? Who has the strength to withstand the furious rage of the devil directed at us. How do we keep his vile venom from coming into our souls and poisoning us? How many believers have ruined their lives by the root of bitterness? How many have harbored childhood resentments down through the years? How many have been hurt by a friend or loved one and never recovered? How many have reacted against a fellow believer in Christ and walked off in resentment nursing their wounds?

But here we see God has given us a perfect provisions which will enable us to stand up against Satan's rage and not be affected by it. And this provision is found in the dynamic of faith. How this works is when we exercise faith in the Word of God, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit will produce in us the spiritual mental attitude of agape love and the mind of peace, and **it is this state of peace and this mind of love that will protect our souls by preventing them from reacting to the anger and hatred that is directed at us!**

OO. Faith is the main actor in the drama of our life.

“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;” 2 Peter 1:1,5 - σιμων πετρος δουλος και αποστολος ιησου χριστου τοις ισοτιμον ημιν λαχουσιν πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη του θεου ημων και σωτηρος ημων ιησου χριστου...και αυτο τουτο δε σπουδην πασαν παρεισενεγκαντες επιχορηγησατε εν τη πιστει υμων την αρετην εν δε τη αρετη την γνωσιν.

Throughout the NT metaphors are used to help us in our understanding of a spiritual concept. But not only to just help us understand it, but to give us a greater dimension and depth in our **understanding** of a spiritual concept and our **application** of it to our lives! There are military metaphors used in the NT, agricultural metaphors, metaphors of astronomy, the metaphor of the Greek mystery religion, and the one that the Apostle Peter uses here in 2 Peter 1:1-11, actually verses 3-11, is Greek drama. So the

Greek stage is the back drop of this passage that we have to use to fully understand and appreciate this passage, especially in all its nuances.

For it is the stage of the Greek drama that creates the ambiance for the greatest play that you will ever go to see, for it is the one where you are the key actor on the stage of your life on earth. The lights are turned down low, the curtain is opened, and now you, the believer in Jesus Christ, walk out on stage. But to understand this, we will need to have a little understanding of Greek drama. So here's where I put my disclaimer in. I did not major in drama in school and I'm sure there are many students of the arts who are more familiar with the stage and especially Greek drama, but I do know enough of the terms to help us understand them and how they relate to the spiritual dynamics going on in the Christian life, and especially toward our application of them in our own life's drama.

There is a relationship between the Greek drama and the Christian's spiritual life. The story of the drama that took place on stage covered a certain day in the life of a hero who died, tragically, who could have lived victoriously and successfully, but didn't because he had a tragic flaw. It spoke of the hero who had so much going for him in life, who had such a great potential, but died suddenly, tragically, because of his own actions. It speaks of what could have been, and what should have been, and what would have been, if only he didn't have a tragic flaw.

The tragedy was used for religious purposes in the mystery cult of Dionysus, much like we find in some of the European classics of today. It was also used for a catharsis of the soul; the cleansing of the emotions from the soul, sort of like purifying, or cleansing, the heart. The story develops, the plot thickens, the hero is suddenly and tragically murdered, the heart bursts forth with tears and emotions, and the hearers are cleansed.

But there is another use for this Greek tragedy and that is for Christians in staying on course, dealing with and overcoming their soul sins, communion with God and going on to spiritual maturity. Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, not only uses Greek terms for the stage in his letter, he sets this entire passage in the context of the Greek tragedy! He's paralleling for us what he saw unfold on stage centuries ago to instruct us in the spiritual life dynamic!

The word **tragedy** comes from *tragodia*, the goat song. A goat was used in the performance of the drama where it was walked off stage. Apparently in ancient times human sacrifice was first used, but later on was replaced by a goat, which was the hero. A **tragic flaw** is a defect in the character of the hero that brings about his own downfall. Where the hero's death, or demise, is caused, not by things happening to him, but by his own actions! All of which could have been avoided, but because of the hero's flaw, or series of flaws, which he couldn't see in himself, (or wouldn't see), he became responsible for his own death or demise. Interestingly enough, the Greek word for the **tragic flaw** was *hamartia*, our word for **sin**!

The Greek tragedy was played out on stage where there was the main actor portraying the hero, such as Agamemnon, and several minor actors who composed the **chorus**. During the play the chorus would be warning the hero of the tragedy that lay in wait for him. But, because of the hero's tragic flaw, he did not listen to them, and because he didn't listen he died tragically. The hero's tragic flaw, or series of flaws, was error in judgment, sin, and overwhelming pride. And his death was as the result of his own actions, or failure to act, not on anyone else.

And so we have the drama of the Christian's life, our life, being played out before our eyes. Will it end in death? Will it end in tragic loss or failure? Or will we overcome these flaws that we all have and go

on to victory, spiritual completion and fulfill the plan of God for our lives? That is to be seen and it all depends upon whether we *listen to the chorus* and apply what they are trying to tell us!

One of the plays centered around Agamemnon, who not only was a king, but the commanding general of the Greek army. In the course of time they went to war against Troy, and as they set sail the winds died down making it impossible. To keep the story short, he was advised by his soothsayer to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia, to the Olympian goddess Artemis. The winds then picked up and he went on to Troy. While he was gone for ten years word of this had reached his wife, Clytemnestra, who burned in seething rage against her husband seeking revenge.

While Agamemnon was off fighting the Trojans for these ten years his wife had taken a lover. And then one evening a watchman on the roof of Agamemnon's palace sees the night sky reddened with the signal of a burning fire on a mountaintop signaling Agamemnon's victory over Troy. Which meant that he would be home soon. And so the plot thickens with his wife and her lover.

When Agamemnon arrives he comes with a captive, a prophetess named Cassandra, who is also his concubine, further enraging his wife Clytemnestra. When Agamemnon shows up, his wife pretends to be joyful at his arrival, and that all is well, and how much she has missed him all those years. But in her heart she hates him and is planning his death.

Well the gist of the story is that his bath is made ready for him, and while he is bathing unsuspectingly his wife comes in and plunges a knife into him and avenges her daughter's death. Saying that his blood spurting forth was as sweet as the rain falling from the heavens to the fields of corn.

Now what is the chorus doing all this time? The chorus of elders is suspicious that the Queen is plotting her husband's death and so they keep trying to warn Agamemnon. Saying, “*At home there tarries like a lurking snake, [snake: Clytemnestra]; Biding its time, a wrath unreconciled; A wily watcher, passionate to slake; In blood, resentment for a murdered child.*”

Even though Agamemnon had done a terrible wrong in his life, and even though he had many tragic flaws (sin), if he had listened to the chorus, he would not have died. But it was his arrogance that downplayed the seriousness of his act, its impact on his wife and any actions she might take, and his pride disregarded the advice that the chorus was trying to give him!

PP. Equal Privilege v.1

“*Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*” 2 Peter 1:1 - *σιμων πετρος δουλος και αποστολος ιησου χριστου τοις ισοτιμον ημιν λαχουσιν πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη του θεου ημων και σωτηρος ιησου χριστου*

Peter first states his position as a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, then he begins with the matter of our faith in Christ and how it is that we obtained it.

The word used for **precious** is *isotimos* and it meant of equal value, or held in equal honor, equal in the sense of the same kind. It was used in secular Greek to denote having the same status and rank in civic life. The idea being that men are equal to each other only under the law. Only equals can enter into legal relationships, so that in civic life, where all men are governed by law, they become equals.

In Greek or Roman society every citizen had certain rights and privileges under the law. By being a citizen, or by becoming a citizen, each individual now had equal access to all the rights, privileges and protections of the law.

This underlines the fact that every Christian has equal access to God as his Judge, Ruler and Father. So the idea here is not so much upon the preciousness of our faith, although it is precious, but **the privilege and right of access to God that all Christians equally hold**, regardless of race or sex.

Now it says that we have **received** a faith, but is this faith objective faith as in the body of doctrine, or the doctrine that we have believed? Or is this to be taken in the subjective sense of the ability to trust Christ as our Savior?

Usually when faith is to be taken in the objective sense it will have the definite article with it - the faith, for when the meaning of faith is clearly objective, the definite article is used. But it is omitted here, leading us to conclude, which the context also bears out by the subjective use of faith in v.5, that it is subjective faith being discussed, that is, **our faith in Jesus Christ**. Which reveals that our ability to trust Christ as our Savior was given to us by God.

God deals with us on the basis of grace. Only faith can appropriate the grace of God. Therefore God gives man the faith needed to believe on Christ as his Savior, and he gives believers the faith which is necessary to appropriate his grace in their post salvation experience.

This is what so many mean when they say we are saved by God's grace. What they are saying is that God, in his grace, gave us the faith to believe on Christ! *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that (the ability to believe on Christ) not of yourselves: it (the ability to believe on Christ) is the gift of God: Not of works (human activity), lest any man should boast (brag about what he has or what he has done).”* Ephesians 2:8,9

Now the passage tells us that we have **received** this faith, and if we have received it, then it says that we did not possess it ourselves. Now the word for to **receive** is the orist active participle of *lanchno*, which meant to obtain by lot, to draw lots, to receive by lot, to get something by drawing lots. It's the root idea for the lottery. Now before anyone thinks that one draws lots to see who gets the faith, which is a wrong interpretation, we need to see what it meant back then.

It was used for a variety of ideas back then, one of them was to draw a lot to see who could bring their suit into court. But the idea behind getting something by drawing a lot was like getting something **“out of the blue”**. It denoted the idea that **something happened more by luck or chance, rather by one's desire or effort**, along with the idea of being **unexpected**.

It came to mean, and this is how it was regarded, as **divine appointment**. One's lot in life was what he drew, that is, it had been allotted to him by God. We have a similar expression today in, “that's the hand I drew”, or, “we have to play the cards we're dealt”. Men drew lots as a means of trying to determine divine will and appointment. Whoever received the lot was the one that God had chose. So when they said that a man *drew his lot*, it was an idiom which meant that he was appointed by God apart from any desire or effort of his own.

It's significant that the Holy Spirit uses *lanchno*, **to draw a lot, to explain how we receive faith**. It's significant in itself that we receive the faith necessary to believe on Christ as our Savior, because that tells us **that saving faith is not and cannot be generated by the person, but is received from God**.

And it's significant, because out of the nineteen words used to define *receive* he uses the word for the drawing of lots.

Men in those times would look at this phenomenon of *lanchano* from the standpoint of luck, or chance, or fate, maybe out of the blue, or the luck of the draw. **It was their way of expressing something out of the ordinary, such as, cause and effect, decisions and consequences, hard work and reward. So when something happened to them out of the ordinary**, especially if it was good or involved money, they would say that it happened by way of *lanchano*, “that he got lucky”!

But *lanchano* takes a different spin when it comes into the world of God and men and our receiving of faith to believe on Christ. Here we have the ideas that it happened suddenly, or unexpectedly, out of the blue. One of your buddies or coworkers, who always was going out drinking and carousing, comes in after the weekend and now he's saved! He's believed on Christ and is a changed man.

There's something else about the using of this word and that is the drawing of lots is a great equalizer. For here it does not matter how rich, poor, tall, short, smart, dumb, good or bad you are, because all human merit, will and efforts are set aside. One simply has drawn his lot, that is, it happened to him out of the blue and not because of anything he had done.

And this faith we received to believe on Christ comes to us “*through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*”. There are those who believe that man initiates in his faith toward God compelling God to respond in his grace. Rather it is God who initiates toward man in his grace giving man the faith needed to trust his Son as their Savior.

We have received this faith through the righteousness of God, because it is his righteousness that condemns all of man's works, efforts, or merits. So if God condemns everything that man could do, then he had to provide the means of saving man in his grace. This is why God gives us the faith to trust Christ as our Savior. Which reveals that man in himself does not possess saving faith.

One only needs to look at the apostle Paul to see this matter of faith and salvation. He was on the road to Damascus to persecute more Christians because of his hatred of Jesus Christ, when the Lord suddenly and unexpectedly appeared to him, “out of the blue”, and saved him. In a moment of time Paul received the faith to believe on Christ as his Savior and became a changed man.

QQ. Faith overcomes the world.

“*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*” 1 John 5:4 - οτι παν το γεγεννημενον εκ του θεου νικα τον κοσμον και αυτη εστιν η νικη η νικησασα τον κοσμον η πιστις ημων. “*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” 1 John 5:5 τις εστιν ο νικων τον κοσμον ει μη ο πιστευων οτι ησους εστιν ο υιος του θεου.

The word for **born** is the perfect passive participle of *gennao*, which tells us that our spiritual birth, the act of regeneration, is not only something that we have received by the act of God, but also that it has now been brought into a permanent state of existence. Once someone believes on Christ as their Savior the Holy Spirit enters into their bodies and creates a new nature inside of them. This is a permanent one time act of God that can never be taken away and will exist into eternity.

Born of God is *ek tou theou*, which denotes out of the source of, or the origin of something. Which is to say that our new spiritual existence on earth originates from God the Father himself. Our human, fleshly existence has its origin from our earthly fathers and mothers, but our spiritual existence, this new man, this new creation, has its origin from none other than God himself!

So, **whatsoever is born of God**, is a reference to all those men, women and children who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. So now we know who we are talking about. So now we see what has happened as the result of their faith in Christ; they have **overcome the world!**

Now when we are talking about the **world**, *kosmos*, we are not talking about the planet earth. We do belong to an heavenly kingdom and one day we will go there, but *kosmos* refers to the diabolical rule of Satan over planet earth.

When Adam sinned against God, he turned over his rule of the planet to the devil. He never lost ownership of the earth, because he never had it in the first place. That title to the earth and to the nation of Israel the Father retained so he could give it to his Son, Jesus Christ. But he did turn over his rule of the earth to Satan, who has been ruling it ever since Adam's sin in the garden.

Satan's rule of the earth, under which we are all born into as slaves, because our fathers and mothers were slaves of his system, is accomplished in three areas under what is referred to as **Babylon**. There is **religious** Babylon found in all religions outside of biblical Christianity, who are all offshoots of Rome; **economic** Babylon which we presently see controlling the entire world, including America, and this is found primarily in the Uniform Commercial Code; and **political** Babylon where the world is ruled by a city corporation, namely the Vatican state, and other city corporations under it. When we believed on Christ, the Lord redeemed us from being slaves under his dominion. We are now free! This has given us positional victory over the devil and his rule over us. Now, as believers in Christ, we are to continue walking in this newness of life by faith in the Word of God and the filling of the Holy Spirit, doing the will of our heavenly Father, so we can have tactical victory over Satan and his system.

RR. We must stand by faith.

“If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.” Isaiah 7:9b NIV

We have studied many passages on faith, how important it is, how only it pleases God, how we resist the devil in faith, how we metabolize the teaching of God's Word by faith, etc., but here we see how imperative it is that we **must** stand by faith!

Ahaz, who had descended from the house of David, was the king of Judah known as the southern kingdom. He was young, even perhaps weak, and somewhat fearful. And now he was going to experience a real test of his faith by having to face an alliance of two northern kings who were going to attack Jerusalem. Rezin, king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel.

Apparently they had decided to invade Jerusalem, tear it apart and divide it among themselves and make the son of Tabeel king. The son of Tabeel cannot be identified with certainty. More than likely he was the nominee chosen by Rezin to be the king he installed over Jerusalem. *“Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it .”* Isaiah 7:7

But there seems to be a play on words here by the use of the word Tabeel. The word Tabeel may have been Aramaean for Tabeal, which would have translated out as, “God is good”, but was probably

intentionally corrupted by Isaiah to Tabeel to mock him, because it meant, “**good for nothing**”!

Ahaz was faced with the same sort of thing that so many of God's people have been faced with in their lives and that is personal weakness in the face of superior foes, who seek to destroy you, your life and everything that you have in life, and the need for faith in the Lord, who will give us the strength to stand up against them and come out the other side victorious. Other than the personal assurance from Isaiah the prophet, Ahaz should have gone back and recycled the doctrines concerning him being a descendant from the house of David and what all that meant as it pertained to him being a king over Judah. *Yahweh* had promised David that his throne would stand sure, in fact, he had covenanted with David concerning this matter! So Ahaz should have faith rested the whole thing and let God handle it.

But we see that *Yahweh* sent Isaiah out to him with commands, instructions and prophecy about what was going to happen to Aram and Israel sarcastically referring to Rezin and Pekah as two smoldering stumps of firewood. And the commands he gives Ahaz are: ***be careful, keep calm, do not be afraid and do not lose heart!*** “*Say to him, ‘Be careful, keep calm and don’t be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stumps of firewood—because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah.’*” Isaiah 7:4

But then Isaiah goes on to tell Ahaz something very important, something that is crucial to all this and that is ***he has to stand by faith and if he doesn't, then he won't stand at all!*** “*If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.*” Isaiah 7:9b NIV

Ahaz had to go back and look at this whole thing that he was facing not from the perspective of himself personally, but from the standpoint of God, not just from the standpoint of God's power, but from what God was doing on earth, His will and the promises and commitments he had made to certain people. By faith he was getting out of the way for God to operate.

SS. Do we have faith?

“*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*” Matthew 21:21 - αποκριθεις δε ο ιησους ειπεν αυτοις αμην λεγω υμιν εαν εχητε πιστιν και μη διακριθητε ου μονον το της συκης ποιησετε αλλα και τω ορει τουτω ειπητε αρθητι και βληθητι εις την θαλασσαν γενησεται

When the Lord had cursed the fig tree, and they all came back by it the next day, the disciples were amazed at what had happened, that it had withered so quickly. So they asked the Lord, “***How soon is the fig tree withered away!***” Matthew 21:20 The word *pos* is an interrogative particle which asks the question of how, or in what manner did something take place. They saw that the fig tree was withered, but they wanted to know how it happened! And with the use of the word, *parachrema*, they wanted to know how it happened so **quickly**. *Parachrema* meant immediately, at once, or so quickly.

Apparently the disciples were more interested in the physical phenomenon of the tree withering than they were in the spiritual lesson about the spiritually dead nation of Israel and how it was being cursed by God, or the spiritual dynamics of faith and the power that comes alongside the exercise of faith.

But the Lord answers their question of **how** it happened in verse twenty one. The passage begins with the word *apokrinomai*, which meant answer a question, or to reply to someone's statement, and then he goes into the mechanics of this destructive miracle, the only one recorded in the NT, and tells them

that **it was accomplished by the exercise of his faith**. And he also tells them that **they too can do such things, if only they believe**.

He begins his statement with the phrase, “*Verily I say unto you*” or, “*I tell you the truth*”, *amen lego humin*. *Amen lego humin* was a solemn introductory formula used at the beginning of a statement to alert the listener that what he was going to hear was of the utmost importance, that they needed to listen to it, understand it and do what it says!

Here the Lord is giving the disciples the secret for accomplishing these mighty works of power, (which actually come from God), but it is a two fold condition: **one**, there must be faith, and **two**, there can be no doubting. Both conditions have to be present. What we are looking at here is the secret of the universe: a faith idea, truth, grace and the power of God.

He then says, **If ye have faith**, *ean exhete pistin*. *Echete* is the present active subjunctive of the verb *echo*, which means to have or to possess something. So what he's saying is, **if** you have or possess faith. But when we have *ean* used with the subjunctive mood of the verb it brings out a third class condition of **if**, where the condition for something to be fulfilled is first stated, and then **if the condition stated is met, then its fulfillment will come to be**.

For example, 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins*, (maybe we will and maybe we won't), (but if we do, then), *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. Which tells us that the condition that God sets for him forgiving our sins and cleansing us is based upon our confessing or acknowledging our sins to him.

But the other part of the condition in addition to faith is, “*and doubt not*”, *kai me diakrithete*. *Diakrithete* is the aorist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*, the word for wavering back and forth between two positions. The subjunctive mood is also used with this verb, along with the connective use of *kai*, which tells us that these two ideas are connected together in the condition.

Which tells us that **we must be exercising our faith**, active voice revealing the activity of the will in all this, and at the same time **not be doubting**. *Diakrino*, to doubt, meant to waver back and forth between two positions or opinions, which means to be believing that God will do something, then go back to not believing that he will. It's to go back and forth between the positions of faith and unbelief. Maybe it will, maybe it won't. Will it? Won't it? Yes? No?

To *believe* is used here in the **active voice**, which shows the activity of the believer's will is involved in choosing to believe. But to *doubt* is found in the **passive voice** indicating that there is something in all of us, our fallen flesh natures, that acts upon the believer in such a way that **causes** him to doubt, that **causes** him to go back and forth between faith and unbelief.

Mark's statement on the mountain emphasizes the idea of prayer. Whenever there is something that the believer wants, then it is expressed to God in prayer. So **Mark's faith is a faith that believes and prays**. “*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. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye **pray, believe** that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*” Mark 11:23,24

Prayer is the vehicle by which one's will is expressed and directed toward God. God's almighty **power** is its source and assurance. **Faith** is the opening through which his power operates. And God's **sovereignty** is its only restriction.

Christ tells the disciples that if they have faith, they will be able to not only do what he did, but even more, “*ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain*”. And we notice the word *ye*, or **you**. It's not just that **he** did it, but by the inclusion of the word **you**, he's telling them that **they** can do it! If they have faith. **They**, if **they** have faith, could say to the mountain, “*Be thou removed and be thrown into the sea*”, then it would do that!

The **first** command in Mark is *artheti*, the aoist passive imperative of *airo*. The **second** command is *bletheti*, the aoist passive imperative of *ballo*. We notice that both words have the same grammatical construction; they are both aoist passive imperatives, which tells us that two commands are directed toward the mountain, to be *removed*, (from its place), and be *thrown...where?...into the sea*.

The passive voice tells us something else. If they were in the active voice, it would tell us that the mountain had volition, which it doesn't. There is no animus, no soul life in a mountain, so it is incapable of volitionally obeying a command. But because it is in the passive voice, it tells us that the mountain has been the recipient of a command and will be the recipient of the action.

Which is to say that the mountain will be removed and be thrown, passive voice, into the sea. It will receive the action of the commands. But there will be something else, or I should say, someone else who will be the causative agent behind all this and that is the power of God the Father.

The question and issue for all of us is, 'Do you believe this?' Not just do you believe that Christ could do this? But do you believe that any believer in Christ could do this? I think the resounding answer from most, if not all, believers is, No! Even the yes' would have a loud no behind them. So was this just idle chit chat? Was he describing a hypothetical situation that could never exist? Then why did Christ take the time to talk about it? **And then why did he use the second person plural and tell them that they could do this, if they had the faith?**

Mark 11:23 adds, “*and shall not doubt in his heart*”, *kai me diakrithe en te kardia autou*, the aoist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*. This is the second part of the two-fold condition for getting God to answer our prayers. One, we must be believing, and two, we must not be doubting.

“*In the heart*” is the dative case of *en te kardia*, telling us where the location of doubting comes from - the heart. Included also is the causative sense, which is to say, that **it is our hearts that cause us to doubt**. Our minds may believe something to be true, but it is our hearts that cause us to doubt. **It's the things going on in our heart that influence us away from the position of truth and faith.**

The Lord talks about the heart in Matthew 15:19, “*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*”, and Mark 7:21, “*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*” Quite a list of negative dynamics going on in the heart and all of them detract from faith.

Matthew has *dialogismoï poneroi* for evil thoughts, tending toward the idea of sexually impure thoughts, carnality, etc.. While Mark has *dialogismoï hoi kakoi*, tending toward the idea of evil reasonings, or the process of human rationalism devoid of faith, which has the idea of worldly viewpoint, the thinking of the world and its people, thinking based upon emotions, assumptions, etc..

It is this process of rationalism that we have to be on guard for in the life of faith. The mind reasons that it can't be done. The reasoning process of the world's people says it can't be done. And this is

where doubt enters into our minds. **We must believe God when he says it can be done!** This is exactly what Proverbs 3:5 is about, “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*” Trust in the Lord and stop leaning on our ability to reason things out with our minds!

Doubting is not unbelief. It is the wavering back and forth, the going back and forth between the two positions of belief and unbelief. This is exactly what Elijah was describing in 1 Kings 18:21, “*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long **halt ye between two opinions?** if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*” If Yahweh is God, then follow him. But if *Baal* is God, then follow him! If you think that Satan, or the people of the world, or your own thinking is true, then believe it! **But if you think that Christ's words are the truth, then believe them and act on them!**

The heart tends toward unbelief because of its reasonings and doubts, so it acts upon the believer in such a way that **it creates an opposing viewpoint to faith.** The writer of Hebrews told us about the problem of the unbelieving heart in Hebrews 3:12, “*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief**, in departing from the living God.*”

The Apostle James told us to purify our hearts, James 4:8, “*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*” To purify, *katharizo*, was to cleanse something from dirt or evil. It had the idea that something was new or clean, but became dirty, so the dirt, the unbelief, needed to be removed from it. James addressed this very problem in our prayers to God where we are to believe while we are praying and not be wavering back and forth between faith and unbelief. He said that the believer who does this is a *double minded* believer, *dipsichos*, literally a double souled believer unstable in all he does. “*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. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*” James 1:6-8

Another doctrinal concept that we can use to purify our hearts, because we have so many problems with the heart, is having our mind's set on the things above, not on the things on the earth. “*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*” Colossians 3:2 By looking forward to heaven, the New Jerusalem and our eternal inheritance with Christ we will purify our hearts. “*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*” 1 John 3:3

The Holy Spirit inspires faith ideas, not lust ideas. But the flesh will deceive us into thinking that our lust ideas are faith ideas! So how can we know the difference? It goes back to understanding and knowing what the various categories of lust are so we can eliminate them from our prayers. “*Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*” James 4:3

TT. Believing and praying.

“*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, **believing**, ye shall receive.*” Matthew 21:22 - και παντα οσα αν αιτησητε εν τη προσευχη πιστευοντες ληψεσθε While Matthew writes, “*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; **it shall be done.***” Matthew 21:21

Mark has it as, “*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 11:23

Matthew has, “*it shall be done*” and Mark has “*shall come to pass*”. Both passages use the verb *ginomai*, which signifies a change of condition, state, or place. And would be better translated as to become, or come to be. It doesn't exist now, **but it will in the future!** So when he says, “*if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; **it will come to be***.”

Mark emphasizes the contrast between faith and unbelief in his passage by the use of *alla*, the conjunction of contrast. He says that if we do not doubt in our hearts, **but** believe that those things that we say shall come to pass, we will have whatsoever we ask.

In an odd sort of way unbelief is a sort of faith, a negative faith, a belief that something **won't happen**, that it won't come to pass! When the twelve spies went into the land and came back with their reports, two believed they could, while the ten believed they couldn't! It becomes unbelief when it goes against what God says. If God says we can do it, **faith says that we can!**

We not only can change our life by the exercise of faith, but we can also change life on earth! The power of God coupled with our faith can change both the spiritual world and the material world. By the exercise of faith we can not only change our lives, our circumstances, our environment, but the lives of people that we don't even know, both in the present and in the future!

Hebrews 6:4-6 deals with this concept of power, “*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the **powers** of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*”

Many Christians incorrectly think that to “fall away”, *parapipto*, means to lose their salvation. But *parapipto* was a nautical term and what it actually meant was to drift off course. At one time these believers were attending a local church, taking in Bible Doctrine and living life in the filling of the Holy Spirit. But because they were under so much social and economic pressure by the religionists, they drifted off course from grace by going back to the temple, thus crucifying the Lord afresh. And as long as they were doing that they couldn't be spiritually renewed.

They had a taste of the powers to come in eternity future that God has for the entire Royal Family of God; powers that they could see in operation through the exercise of their faith in the Word, prayer and the filling of the Holy Spirit. **God's power that we can see operate today, if we exercise faith!**

We begin with Matthew 21:22, “*And all things, whatsoever*”, which tells us that this is open to **all things!** Whatever it is that we desire, and that is not to be confused with lust, whatever our faith idea is, is open to being put before God in our prayer requests for him to answer.

The word for ask is *aiteo* and is the word used for an inferior party, say a subject of a kingdom, placing his request before the superior party, his king. It speaks of the believer in Christ going before the eternal God with his prayer requests.

“*In the prayer*” is *en te proseuche*, or *in the prayer, or by means of prayer*. Whatever things we ask for in *the prayer [request]*. Which tells us that prayer, once again, is the vehicle by which we make known our requests to God. And all things whatsoever you ask for in your prayer.

“Believing” is *pisteuontes* and is found in the present active participle, whose action occurs at the same time as the main verb, which is asking in prayer. **So what it tells us is that we are to be believing while we are submitting our prayer requests to God!**

And then we have the word “*ye shall receive*”, *lambano*, which is in the future middle indicative. The first thing we notice about this is that the action of the future tense always takes place at some time in the future. The next thing is that it is found in the indicative mood, the mood of reality, which also has the idea of absolute certainty. So God will grant our prayer requests, but we have to remember that **there will always be a time factor involved**, in that **the answer to our prayers will come some time in the future!** The last thing is that it is found in the middle voice, which tells us that we will be benefited by the action of receiving that answer to our prayers. Which also brings out the point that **whatever God does for us will benefit us, which is why he does not grant our lust requests!**

Mark has it as, “*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 *δια τουτο λεγω υμιν παντα οσα αν προσευχομενοι αιτεισθε πιστευετε οτι λαμβανετε και εσται υμιν* “*Because of this I say to you, what things soever you ask for, when you pray, believe that you have received them and you will.*” Again we see the all things whatsoever idea in this passage, and we also see the concept of asking is taking place at the same time as our prayers to God. Here Mark tells us that while we are praying to God asking him for this and that, we are to be **believing that we already have them**, and when we do, we will!

In Matthew 21:21 the Lord is telling us that if we have faith, maybe we do and maybe we don't, but if we do, then whatever it is that we ask God for in our prayer request, whether in commanding a mountain to be moved or asking God for something else, then will come to be. Here he uses the word *ginomai*, which signifies a change of condition or state. That which is not will be, or it will come to be, or come into existence. **What was not there in existence before will now be!**

UU. Only believe.

“*As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.*” Mark 5:36 - μη φοβου μονον πιστευε.

This is where Christ came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue where a young girl was ill. The crowd thought she was dead, but the Lord said she wasn't. He told her to rise up and walk and she did. But in verse thirty six he gave us a very important doctrine to live by, to **be not afraid, only believe!**

These two verbs are both found in the imperative mood of command. To **fear** is the present middle imperative of , and **only believe** is in the present active imperative of *pisteuo*. Which would translate out as, “stop being afraid”, because of the use of the word *me* telling us that the command is to stop an action in progress; they were afraid and were to stop it. And the next one would be to “keep on believing”, because of the use of the present active imperative, which has the idea of one being commanded to continue on in the action they were doing.

The word *monon*, from *monos*, meant only, alone, the only one, isolated, by itself, the only thing. Whatever is being discussed is to be the only thing involved. Which tells us that we're to live our lives **only by faith!** And that faith in God and his Word is the only thing that is to be circulating through our stream of consciousness! There is to be no place for doubt, disbelief, or fear – **only faith**.

And we want to notice that in both commands the active voice is used to show that the believer in Christ **is** to do this, to not be afraid and to only believe, **but it also tells us that he can do this!** That's

the good news about living in the spiritual life dynamic. **We are not victims and we are not hostages to the world around us and to our situation. We can choose to believe!**

In John 14:27 the Lord told us that he left his peace behind on earth for us to possess, experience and enjoy. “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*” To be **troubled** is the present passive imperative of *tarasso* and be **afraid** is the present active imperative of *deiliao*.

Tarasso meant to be agitated, disturbed, confounded, unsettled, stirred up, thrown into a state of disarray, or agitation of the soul. *Tarasso* would be a **nondescript agitation going** on inside us. It would refer to what we refer today as being **stress in the soul**. Making a distinction, pressure would be that which is **external**, while stress would refer to what we have **internalized** in our souls. Pressure is inevitable; but stress is optional. Once we have **stress**, or this nondescript agitation inside us, then the next thing that will come along is the activation of the emotional complex with usually the first emotion being **fear**, then followed by anger. So lack of faith opens the way for the external problems and pressures of life to become stress in our souls followed by fear. But the word for fear here is not *phobeo*, but *deiliao* which is one of the words for fear, but a fear that results in timidity or cowardice.

Faced with the prospect of being all alone in a world that hates Christ, like children without parents, and having the one that you love, the only one that you really love, leave you to go to another place is understandable that their hearts are stressed, with all kinds of things going on in their minds, with fear one of them. But such a kind of fear that would cause them to be afraid, to shrink back. It’s like they would want to go run and hide, **but Christ’s antidote for the poison of fear is his peace. So he tells them to stop being agitated and afraid because his peace will handle everything in life.**

Christ told us these things so we can have peace in this life, **but we will have to exercise faith in what he has said!** “*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*” John 16:33

1. “*I have told you these things, so that (for the purpose) in me you may have peace*”.

Christ has been instructing his disciples on many things in chapters 15 and 16, one of them was on the ministry of the Holy Spirit to them when he comes to earth. The word **told** here is *laleo* and was used to denote instruction in a conversational tone and form. Some people think that there is such a thing as preaching and teaching, where teaching is something one does in Sunday School, but preaching is where one modulates the voice, gets a rhythm going, cranks up the volume and throws the emotions into it to get people worked up.

Where what is really going on is just communicating God’s Word. The preferable form, which one uses when dealing with positive volition is *laleo*, a normal speaking voice. If one is dealing with negative volition it goes to a **rebuke**. And if it is dealing with strong negative volition it goes to a **chewing out**, often accompanied by warnings and sarcasm.

Now *hina* plus the subjunctive introduces a purpose clause. Christ has been instructing his disciples in a conversational tone on several matters and he’s doing it for the purpose that they might experience the peace that he has. **Christ has peace; he has always had it; he’s giving it to them and he wants them to experience it also!** But experiencing peace is not an automatic thing. There are some things involved that one must apply, if he wants to experience and enjoy inner tranquility. Certainly one would need to go back over chapters 15 and 16 again and again to understand what Christ is talking about and

metabolize it by faith. What this will do is not only give the believer knowledge, but a frame of mind concerning spiritual realities. The he goes on to explain to us the reality of where we are in this world and a word of encouragement concerning our lives and the future.

2. *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”*

“In the Cosmos you are having pressure. But take heart (be encouraged)! I have overcome the Cosmos.” **Christ is stating an objective fact to them that in this world system, on this planet they will have trouble, *thlipsis*, pressure!** (Anybody having pressure in his or her life?) Living in a world presided over by the devil, living in an hostile environment, surrounded by millions of people with sinful natures, having a sinful nature in the flesh ourselves, having to deal with harsh natural elements, having to fight just to survive, living on a planet filled with demons - yes, there is pressure! And it is not that pressure might exist; the indicative tense of *echo*, to have and to hold, tells us that we will have pressure! And in the present tense it is a **constant reality**.

But he hits us with *alla*, the conjunction of contrast! But he says, **“take heart”**. *Tharseo* meant to be encouraged, to take heart, thus leading one to be confident, instead of fearful. When one looks at the things mentioned that are found in the world; the things that cause us pressure in life, we will be fearful. And **fear robs us of our peace**. So he tells them to take heart, to be encouraged and gives them the reason why; he has overcome the world! And because he wants us to be continually confident and courageous toward our life, toward having to live in this world “with devils filled”, **we have to be continually be believing the truth that Christ has overcome all of it**. He uses the perfect tense of to overcome to tell us that he had already done it prior to the time that he made this statement. **Courage and calmness for the believer comes through exercising faith in the Word!**

The word for **overcome** is *nikao* and it meant to overcome, to be the victor, to prevail, to conquer, to win. It was used in winning your case in the legal arena, to conquer your enemy on the battlefield and to being the victor in an athletic contest. But what’s interesting here is the use of the perfect tense and not the future, for he states **that he has already overcome the world, perfect tense, and this was before his crucifixion and resurrection**.

The perfect tense looks at the action of the verb from four different standpoints: the beginning of the action, its progress, its completion and the existence of its finished results. And with the use of the indicative mood it **signifies the action as having been completed from the point of view of the present time**.

So when he says that he has overcome the world it’s very significant, because he’s telling them that he has already overcome the world prior to him telling them that. But when did this begin and end? How did he do it? And what was the concept by which he overcame the world?

The Apostle John wrote on this subject of overcoming the world. He says, *“You have overcome the evil one”*, 1 John 2:13 This was **because they were believers in Christ and were strong because the Word of God was in them due to metabolizing it by faith**. It brings in the idea that you have to be stronger than the enemy to win the battle. *“I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”* 1 John 2:14

He also talks about how they were **victorious** over the teachers of false doctrine, the demon spirits, the people belonging to the cosmos and the spirit of the anti-christ, because they are believers in Christ

possessing the Holy Spirit. “*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*”, 1 John 4:4

He also writes that it is **our faith in Christ** that has given us the **victory over the world**. “*For whatsoever is born of God **overcometh the world**: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our **faith**. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” 1 John 5:4,5 “*He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*” Revelation 3:5 “*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*” Revelation 3:21

At exactly what point did Christ overcome the world? It’s hard to say; some say at birth due to him being God and being sinless, but the use of the word *nikao* precludes that conclusion. *Nikao*, to have the victory, or to be the conqueror, implies that **there first has to be a battle!** It is the contest, the court case, the battle for there to be a winner and a loser! And if faith and doing the will of God are a crucial point in all this, then there has to be a test.

It could very well refer to the testing Christ went through by the devil at the end of the forty days in the wilderness, where the devil offered him the world and everything it has to offer. **Christ promptly rejected it** in his faith in the Father’s provisions and his commitment to the Father’s will giving him the victory over the world. The concept of Christ’s victory over the world appears to indicate that Christ had already overcome the world in every aspect by the time, and prior to, the time he was talking to them. The idea would be like, I have already overcome the world. Christ had already lived in the world for some thirty years by this time. He was exposed to everything found in the world, people, life, the religious system and so on, and had already overcome it in his mental attitude.

VV. All things are possible.

“*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, **all things are possible to him that believeth.***” Mark 9:23 - ο δε ιησους ειπεν αυτω το ει δυνασαι πιστευσαι **παντα δυνατα τω πιστευοντι.**

A **possibility** refers to the prospect or potential for something to be true, or come true, for something to come to be, for that which does not exist to come into existence. It’s opposite, **impossible**, means that something cannot happen or will not happen. So, what kind of thinking do we have that governs our lives? Something **won’t** happen? Something **can’t** happen? It probably won’t be! Is our thinking along the lines of **possibility**? Or **impossibility**? Perhaps we need to review once again what the Word of God says.

We need to focus our thinking and faith on what the Word of God says and not listen to other people or our own negative thoughts! “*But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; **but with God all things are possible.***” Matthew 19:26 “*And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: **for with God all things are possible.***” Mark 10:27 “*And he said, The things which are impossible with men **are possible with God.***” Luke 18:27 “*But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; **but with God all things are possible.***” Mark 14:36 “*Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: **is there any thing too hard for me?***” Jeremiah 32:27 “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, **all things are possible to him that believeth.***” Mark 9:23

This is it! This is what we have to believe! If we want to get our faith up and running again; the one thing that we have to have is we have to be totally and thoroughly convinced of the idea of possibilities! Not to just adopt the concept of looking at the different possibilities that there are in life, or the various possibilities there are to deal with our problems, but **to adopt the possibility thinking that all things are possible with God!**

The key to all this is to start focusing our complete attention, once again, back on the teaching of the Word of God. For it is as we start concentrating on the Word with our entire soul, and having confessed any sins we might have committed, that we recover the filling of the Holy Spirit; and it is there in the sphere of the filling of the Holy Spirit that **our faith starts to soar.**

Some believers only look at the impossibility of things, while other believers look at the possibilities. Some look at things from the eyes of faith, while others look at things from the standpoint of unbelief. When the twelve spies went into the land, ten came back and said it was impossible. Too many giants (problems). While the two came back and said we can do this! Their reasoning was that if God told us he was giving us the land, and if God told us to go into the land and conquer it, **then God was going to make it all possible.** They were looking at the possibilities of it all because they believed the God with whom all things are possible!

The possibility thinking of faith gives us freedom, while the negative thinking of unbelief binds us, restricts us, enslaves us. Possibility thinking gives us freedom from our past, our present circumstances, our weaknesses, our failures, the opinions of others, the world, flesh and the devil. Possibility thinking is “the sky's the limits”, while negative thinking is “this is the best it'll ever get”.

The possibility thinker looks not to himself, but to God who has the power. He knows that **he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him.** While the negative thinker looks to himself, to his circumstances, to his abilities, and says it can't be done...(because I can't do it)!

But we don't have to concentrate on a doctrine dealing with faith to get our faith back up and running, we can look at many passages of scriptures. For example, we can look at a passage that deals with the difference between the soul and our bodies, “*For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*” 2 Corinthians 4:16. The body is decaying each day, which can be quite painful and discouraging. But when we concentrate on the soul, the inner man, which is the real us inside, we see that it can be renewed each day. And Paul said because of that they didn't lose heart, faint, get discouraged.

There are many and mighty workings of God's power when his people exercise their faith, as both the Old and New Testaments attest to, but there are other wonderful workings of faith that may seem smaller in comparison, but nonetheless just as wonderful and powerful as the others. Such as, to be encouraged instead of discouraged, to have hope instead of despair, to go on in life with a smile on your face, instead of sitting down and giving up!

Or the type of faith that applies the Word of God to our lives which motivates us to keep moving forward in life with faith in the Lord and his Word after suffering disappointment, or failure, or the loss of friends, or the loss of loved ones. “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*” Philippians 3:13

Then there was the story of the man who had a young son who was demon possessed. Now the man recognized what was going on with the boy, but he knew that he didn't have the ability to do anything

about it. So he took the boy to the disciples to have them cast it out, but they couldn't. Finally he took the boy to the Lord to have him cast it out. *“And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;”* Mark 9:17 He had a faith idea!

Here's where we see that the Lord reproached them, not for not believing on him, they had already done that, but for **lacking the faith necessary to accomplish the job!** *“He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.”* Mark 9:17 The way he words it implies that they **all** should have been able to do this!

Afterward the disciples came to the Lord to ask why they weren't able to do it themselves, to which he replied that this category of demon required prayer and fasting. *“And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”* Mark 9:28,29 Prayer and fasting was a setting aside of normal things in life so one could give himself over to the Word and faith.

Christ told the disciples that **all things are possible to the one who believes.** *“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, (and you can), all things are possible to him that believeth.”* Mark 9:21 In Matthew 19:26 the Lord said, *“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”* The word for *with* in the statement, but with God, para de theo, is para, which is used to designate motion to a position alongside, which is to say that, **when God comes alongside a matter that we can't handle, He can do it!**

And that's where prayer and our faith idea comes in. When we go to God in prayer asking him to do something for us, something that we can't do, and believe that he will do it, then God comes in alongside the matter and takes care of it! **But we have to go to God in prayer and we have to believe that he will do what we have asked him to do!** *“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, (you) believing, ye shall receive.”* Matthew 21:22

Probably the shortest and best definition of enthusiasm is this:

Enthusiasm is seeing the possibilities and believing they can happen! Enthusiasm comes to us when we see the endless possibilities in life and believe they will come to be! Enthusiasm comes to us from really believing what the Lord had to say in Mark 9:23, *“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, **all things are possible to him that believeth.**”!*

In a way belief and unbelief have one something in common. Faith is where you believe that something **will come to pass**, that **you will receive** what you have asked God for. While unbelief is where you believe it **won't come to pass**, that **you will not receive** what you have asked for! Just like hope is **believing that good things will come to you in the future**. While despair is **believing that bad things are going to happen to you in the future!** The one is where one's faith is in the **positive**, while the other is where one's faith is in the **negative!**

When the twelve spies came back from spying out the land, ten of them said we can't do it because there are giants in the land. But the other two came back and said we can do it! Those with the negative perspective always have their reason of why it won't work, or why they can't do it, or why it can't be done. But all they're doing is diverting the real reason why from themselves over to something else.

They never come back and tell the truth and say, it's **me**, or it's because **I** don't believe, or it's because **I'm** negative, or it's because **I** don't have the faith. They always have to go back and blame it on something else, in this case, the giants in the land. They always have a reason as to why something can't be done, but never say that it's because of **their** lack of faith. These are the “Yeah, but” crowd, or,

they already tried it, or it can't be done, or why bother, or it's already been done, etc., etc.. They always have something negative to say to wipe out somebody else's positivity! Why? **Because if they let somebody else's positivity go on to success it will reveal their negativity!**

To climb out of this negativity and start having a positive mind full of faith once again, we will have to start saturating our minds with this one thought...“***all things are possible to him that believeth.***”! And when we do, we will find ourselves coming out of the dregs of despair, discouragement, negativity and unbelief and start having a genuine attitude of enthusiasm for life, for our life!

Faith always has to have an object and for the Christian our object is God. There is no merit in faith; the merit is always in the object of faith, which is God again. So when we talk about faith, we are not talking about what faith can do, but what God can do when we look to him in faith.

Paul stated in Philippians 4:13, “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” Or literally, “*I am strong for all things through Christ who strengthens me.*” It wasn't Paul's faith that strengthened him, it was Christ who strengthened him as Paul trusted in Christ. Many believers have fear about the things that they may have to go through in life and that fear will rob them of their faith and enthusiasm, but if they can see that Christ will strengthen them so they can go through anything in life and come through it victoriously, then they can be enthusiastic about life.

Peace, joy, hope and enthusiasm come to the believer in Christ as he or she exercises faith in the Word of God. Paul reveals how this works in Romans 15:13, “*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.*” “*In believing*” is in the sphere of faith, that is, joy, peace, hope and the enthusiasm for life comes to us in the sphere of faith in the Word of God. All we need to do is keep within the sphere of faith in God's Word.

WW. Christ's sheep believe him.

“*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.*” John 10:26 ἀλλ υμεις ου πιστευετε ου γαρ εστε εκ των προβατων των εμων καθως ειπον υμιν.

Christ had been explaining to the Jews that he was the Good Shepherd and how, as the good shepherd, he not only protected the sheep from the wolf, but also that he would, and did, lay down his life, literally his soul - *psuche*, for the sake of and as a substitute for the sheep. “*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*” John 10:11

He sets himself apart from the **hireling**, *misthotos*, who not only does not protect the sheep in his flock, the local church, from the predators in the world, but abandons the sheep when the wolf comes. The reason why is that he is an hireling. A hireling is one who works for wages and today's equivalent would be the word employee. These men are employees of religious corporations, who may hold the title of pastor, or some such other thing, and in actuality their function is one of a general manager of this nonprofit religious corporation, but they are in it for the money.

Now Christ is speaking in principle form that applies to all men and cultures down throughout the centuries, but there is a special application to these religious leaders there in Israel. These religious leaders are involved in organized religion under the guise of being God's men and representatives here on earth, but they are **not** God's men; **they do not know Christ** and they are only in it for the money, the fame, the glory, or the power! They certainly do not care anything about the sheep or their souls! And remember, it is **Christ who laid down his soul to save the souls of his sheep!** “*The hireling*

fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.” John 10:13

But there is something else about this relationship that Christ has with his sheep, and remember, it is the Father who gave these sheep to his Son, and that is **he knows his sheep and his sheep know him!** *“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” John 10:14 KJV* *“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.” John 10:14 NIV*

Now we get down to the matter of faith. Christ's sheep not only have believed in him as their Savior, but **they also believe him!** Whenever Christ speaks, whatever he says, we believe! That's what separates us from all the unsaved of the world, but also from those who claim to be of God, or who say they are Christians! And that's what separates these religious Jews from being his sheep.

Christ states that they do not believe him in John 10:25, *“Jesus answered them, I told you, and **ye believed not**: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.”* Actually he uses the **emphatic negative ou** to make the point that **they absolutely so not believe him**, that they refuse to believe him. Then he goes on to **explain the reason why** in John 10:26 by the use of the word *gar*, which gives **the reason why something occurs or is true**. You do not believe me and the reason **why** you don't is **because you are not my sheep**. And he uses the **emphatic negative ou** once again. *“But ye believe not, **because ye are not of my sheep**, as I said unto you.”*

Then he goes on to reveal something more, something that will be the thing that divides the sheep from the goats in this matter of who belongs to Christ and who doesn't, and that is the whole matter centers around the Word of God. **Do they listen to and believe Christ's words or not?** *“**My sheep hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me.” John 10:27* They don't listen to other men, be it the pope or any other religious leader, but they do listen to God's Word and follow Christ!

XX. Faith In Accepting The Present.

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,” Philippians 3:13

We know that we are to be forgetting the things of the past, especially our hurts, failures and disappointments, and we are to keep pressing toward the things that lie ahead for us, namely, the plan of God for our lives, but all too often we are so mentally occupied with the things of the past, or hanging on to the things of the past, or projecting our minds toward the future, that we fail to live in the present blocking it out all together!

If we have been subjected to repeated trials, suffering, hurt, disappointment, then we are much more prone to cling on to the past, to go back to the past and live in it, at least the pleasant parts of it, because the present is too painful and the future looks dreadful. The logic being, “if this is what my present life has come down to, I hate to see what lies ahead!” **So trauma will often result in the individual escaping from living in the present, hanging on to the past and dreading the future.**

If a believer has gone through a series of trials, injuries, overwhelming pressure and testing, setback after setback, loss of friends and family, loss of job, health, or finances, rejection, abuse, growing old, or anything else that severely impacts the soul, then they run the risk, no the probability, that they will experience trauma! And trauma can be both physical and psychological.

Psychological **trauma** is where one has had a severe emotional wound or shock that creates substantial

lasting damage to one's psychological development, often leading to neurosis. It can result in the individual wanting to go back to live in a pleasant time in the past and at the same time have severe anxiety about the future. It can come about as the result of a serious emotional shock to the soul, or as the result of a series of negative impacts or shocks on one's personal life, as we see with Job. Even purifying, that is, cleansing the heart from negative emotions and memories can be traumatic.

So to live in the **present**, that moment in time somewhere between the past and the future, we have to adjust to the present situation, not just the day, but our place in life and the situation we are currently existing in, by living in the spiritual life dynamic. We do so by concentrating on Bible doctrine and learning to accept the present and getting to the place we are actually thankful for the present.

In every believer's life there have been good things and bad things, good experiences and bad experiences, joys and heartbreaks, good times and bad times, loves and lost loves. Life is made up of all kinds of experiences from crushing disappointments and sadness to overwhelming joy and successes. **But the one thing they all have in common is that they're in the past!**

Good, bad, or indifferent they are all behind us. **The key is what do we do with them?** How do we look at them? Are we looking at the bad, or the positive? Because what we do with them, how we look at them will determine how we will look at the future and what we will do in the future! **The past can't hold us back if we forget it, and that includes the negative experiences of childhood.**

Paul wrote "**forgetting the things that lie behind**". *Epilanthanomai* is in the present middle participle, which tells us that this is something we are to practice daily and that we will be benefited if we do. With *epi* prefixed to it, it intensifies the idea telling us that we're to completely forget the things that lie behind! And why not! These things are just **the beginning of our journey into eternity!** The intensive idea also carries with it that this will be difficult at times and that we will really have to apply ourselves in forgetting the things of the past, to stop hanging on to the things of the past.

The word **forget** in our usage here is from the Old English *forgytan* and means to care nothing about, to disregard, to take no note of, to consider as unimportant. But how do we do that when many of our life's experiences and the people we knew and loved were so important to us? We have to see that to **forget, *forgytan*, also had the idea of a letting go; a letting go of the past, our past.**

And how do we do that? We have to put it all in context. As mentioned earlier, all of our experiences here on earth, all the things that we have gone through here in our lives is just **the beginning of our journey into eternity!** The love that we wanted, which we never got, is over. We'll never have it. The things that we wanted in life; the things that we had and loved, but were taken from us, we will never have. We have to view the past is gone, and is really unimportant, because we're heading into eternity.

"*The things that lie behind*", *ta men opisō*, referred to that part of the race that we have covered and is behind us, but *opisō* was used predominantly of persons. It looked at the idea of friendships and personal relationships, personal attachments to people that we have known, loved or been acquainted with; the people of our past. In life we come across many people, some have had a positive effect on us, others a negative one, but this tells us that we have to leave them behind as we go on with the Lord.

But when the believer has been traumatized by a major event, or by a series of events, then they will be prone to go back in time to past pleasant experiences and try to relive them. Or, if they don't try to relive them, they will constantly dwell on them. Hanging on to the past is one way people can and do try to escape the harsh reality of what they are presently going through.

This is what Job was doing after he went through trial after trial in his life. The Sabeans swept down and stole his oxen and asses killing all his servants. Then fire fell from heaven and destroyed all his sheep and servants. Then the Chaldeans came down and stole all his camels and slaughtered his servants. This was followed by a great wind striking the house of his oldest son, where his sons and daughters were drinking and partying, and they all died! All this was then followed by Satan striking his body covering him with sore boils from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. His wife turned against him, his friends and relatives found him offensive and turned against him, even the low life living free on his property turned against him.

He handled the first waves of traumatic events doctrinally, but when his body was affected, and the whole thing drug on with more things befalling him, including the loss of his business, fortune and his reputation, he started to go back in his mind when life was better for him. He started to wish for the past to be back. He certainly didn't want to live in the present, nor accept the present.

We see this in Job 29:2, “*Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me;*”. The word for **Oh** is *miy-yetten* and was a customary phrase used for wishing. The NIV translates it as, “*How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me;*”. Job's psychological state was one of fear and dread for the **future**, bitterness about the **present**, and a longing for days gone by in the **past** when life was more pleasant for him.

To press forward is also a present middle participle of *epekteino*, which tells us that we will also have to practice this everyday, that we will be benefited by doing so, and at the same time, we have to do both of them to succeed in this. It also has the **intensive idea in it telling us that it will not be an easy thing**. We will have to mentally apply ourselves everyday to **forget the things that lie behind** and to **press forward to what lies ahead for us**, and some days it will be difficult to do it.

What lies ahead for us? **What lies ahead is the wonderful perfect plan of God for our lives here on earth**. A life of production, prosperity, promotion, a life of blessing, service, a life of accomplishments, a life of excitement, enthusiasm, challenge and adventure. Why wouldn't we want to press forward to realize it for our lives? And what ultimately lies before us is eternity with God!

To **press forward** uses the idea of the runner running his race who is completely focused on attaining his goal of crossing the finish line. **The athlete is not concerned with the things behind him in the race, but only on finishing his race**. And that's the lesson we need to learn of finishing God's purpose for our lives. We need to be so focused on moving forward in the plan of God that we forget, or leave behind, the things that lie behind.

And some of those things that lie behind us on the trail were meaningful to us and touched our hearts very deeply. As many a pioneer family could testify to about their young baby, who had died on their journey west that they had to leave behind on the trail. **And so we need to do with those things of the heart that we have been holding on to. We must leave them behind. We must leave them behind so we can embrace the present and move forward into the future!** There's also the idea that we **must forget the things that lie behind** so that we **can press forward!** Too many believers, because they are holding on to the things of the past, everything from hurts and bitterness to nostalgia, lost loves, lost opportunities, regretting one's mistakes and failures, cannot move forward. So for them, **they have to let go so they can move on in the plan of God**.

Forgetting the past, accepting the present, while moving on into the future can be very difficult for us

when the things of the heart so well up to the surface that we are overcome by them. But this is where the application of the Word of God comes in and the difficulty factor of the intensive idea of forgetting the things that lie behind and pressing forward to the things that lie ahead.

By the way, this matter of things welling up in the heart could also be a phase of growth that the Lord is taking us through, where he is now cleansing our hearts of the things that have been there all along and have been holding us back. And by the application of Bible doctrine in the process we have the cleansing, removal and relief from these things that have been holding us back, so we can press on into the future that God has planned for us and accept our present situation and reality!

We must force ourselves, (actually our heart, for it is the heart that has such a problem with letting go of old memories, loves and personal experiences), to let go and leave behind the things of the past, to force ourselves to not be living in the past, to force ourselves to accept the present reality as it is, not as what we wanted it to be, and to force ourselves to think of everything in light of the eternity that we are journeying toward! Accepting and fully embracing the present as it is, not what we wanted it to be, or hoped it would be, or yearned for it to be, but what it actually is, even without those things that we wished would be in our lives, is key to this matter of letting go of the past! And we are able to do this by the faith application of Bible doctrine to our lives! And once we let go of the past and are living in the present we are able to go into the future!

YY. Avoiding despair by faith.

"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." KJV Psalm 27:13 *"I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living."* Psalm 27:13 NASB לֹלְאָ--הֶאֱמַנְתִּי, לְרֵאוֹת בְּטוֹב-יְהוָה: בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים

I had fainted, or, **I would have despaired** are not found in the original, but are added by the translators because of the context. They show this by *italicizing* the words. David is facing fierce hatred and opposition by his enemies, who seek to destroy him with their lies. In this context it is easy to see why his soul would faint, or be in despair. But there was something that was keeping him from despair and that was his faith that he would continue to see the goodness of God in life.

It comes from the conditional negative compound, *lulay*, which tells us that something negative would happen if one does not do something else, which is revealed in the passage by joining it to the hiphil preterite of *amen*, to believe. So what it's saying is that something negative would be going on in his soul, despair, fainting, etc., unless he had believed. **Believed what?** Believed that he would see the goodness of God once again in the land of the living!

There are several ideas found in *amen*. First of all, it meant to prop up something, or to support it. Then, that something was founded, firm and stable, therefore, one could be sure of it certain that it would hold you up. Therefore, one could count on it, rely on it, depend on it, lean on it, etc.. When used in referring to a man, it said that he was reliable, dependable, trustworthy. He could be counted on. When used of an individual's actions, it said that he was relying upon, depending on, counting on someone else. He was leaning on them.

***Amen* means more than to just believe in God, or to believe God, or to believe what his communicators teach. What it means is to base one's life and decisions on it! It means that you are really relying on God's Word, because you're hanging everything in your life on it. The**

Ninevites believed God, after Jonah had preached to them God's warning about Ninevah's destruction, that is, they trusted in him. Jonah 3:5. But Christians are not to believe the wicked, (unbelievers, or believers in reversionism), even if their speech is fair and their words are wonderful, do not believe them, that is, do not count, or rely on what they say or promise. Proverbs 26:24,25.

So when we consider the idea of faith found in *amen*, it has the idea first of all, that the one we are having faith in is himself, faithful and reliable. And because he is, we can count on what he says. It tells us that he has the power, the integrity and the will to do what he says. If he promises to do something, he has the power to carry it out, and the personal integrity to keep his promise. Therefore, we lean on him for support; we count on him to do it; therefore **we make our decisions based on God's faithfulness to his covenant**. And with God we have the perfect person to place our trust in.

We see this idea when David was under pressure, where he relied on the fulfillment of the doctrinal promise to “*once again see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living*”. Psalm 27:13 **David believed this and counted on it as he moved forward in faith in the Lord**. This is what we have to do when facing discouragement or despair in our lives, when we're faced with changes and situations that get us down. **We have to convince ourselves that God is faithful to us and to his Word and he will bless us again in life**. The hiphil stem of *amen* brings out the idea that David was caused, because of the pressure, to lean on the fact that he would see God's goodness again in his life.

ZZ. Activating hope by faith.

“*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.*” Romans 15:13 ο δε θεος της ελπιδος πληρωσαι υμας πασης χαρας και ειρηνης εν τω πιστευειν εις το περισσευειν υμας εν τη **ελπιδι** εν δυναμει πνευματος αγιου.

We have seen that the believer needs to stop hanging on to the past, accept and live in the present and be pressing forward into the future. We have also seen that accepting one's present life and situation is very much needed in letting go of the past, but **he also needs to have a certain mental attitude in the present concerning his future!** And this is where hope comes in.

Hope, *elpis*, is a mental attitude, a spiritual mental attitude, but a mental attitude nonetheless. But it is a **positive mental attitude, a confident mental attitude that good things await him in the future!** And if good things are awaiting him in the future, then there is nothing to be afraid of concerning the future.

The verse tells us that God is the God of hope, but **how** do we get that hope? The passage tells us how by the phrase *en to pisteuein*, εν τω πιστευειν. En plus the present active infinitive of *pisteuo*, to **believe**, tells us a dynamic is activated within the sphere of a certain activity, which activity must be supplied by the believer. **That activity is faith, faith in the Word of God, and when the believer's faith in the Word of God is activated, there, in the sphere of that faith, certain spiritual dynamics are activated in the believer's soul and they are: joy, peace and hope!**

As we have just seen, David had to believe that he would see the goodness of God once again in the land of the living to keep him from despair. Psalm 27:13 But **once he got his faith up and running**, in spite of the tremendous problems that were working against, which problems actually caused him to trust the Lord once again, **he had hope once again concerning the future!**

Hope is the confident mental attitude that good things are going to happen to the believer in the future.

And we know they are because God has promised that **he will cause all things to work out for our good!** Now everything we go through in life is not always good. In fact, they can be down and outright miserable at the time. But God has promised to make them work out for our good! “*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.*” Romans 8:28

Abraham knew what to was to believe and have hope in a hopeless situation for he went through this before God gave him his son. “*Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.*” Romans 4:18 “*Who against hope believed in hope*” is ος παρ ελπιδα επ ελπιδι επιστευσεν. *Para* used with the accusative of hope tells us that something is beyond hope, or contrary to hope.

The **first use of hope** looks at his situation from the human perspective. Abraham was completely unable to perform sexually, so there was no way that he could ever have children. His was certainly a hopeless situation, at least as far as the eyes of man looks at things. But the **second use of hope** has it as, *in hope he believed, ep'elpidi episteusen*, which can be rendered as, upon hope he believed. *Epi* tells us that his faith was resting upon something. It was resting upon the hope that he had concerning the promise that God had made to him about a son. He had come to the place long before this of believing God's promise to him and this settled faith in that promise gave him hope concerning his life and future. And the hope from that settled faith became the basis upon which his faith rested thereafter.

AAA. Salvation comes by faith in Christ.

“*Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*” 1 Peter 1:9 - κομιζομενοι το τελος της πιστεως υμων σωτηριαν ψυχων.

To **receive** is the present middle participle of *komizo*. *Komizo* was used to denote the receiving of one's pay or wages, but more specifically it meant to receive what is coming to you, to obtain the fulfillment of something. It also had the idea of legality meaning that one is legally entitled to something. What this tells us is that when we believe on Christ as our Savior, we not only will receive the salvation of our souls, but that we are legally entitled to that.

The **end** is *telos* and it has the idea of the end or goal toward which a movement is being directed, the last part of something, the conclusion of a matter, the bringing a matter to a close. The entire issue throughout the Bible concerning this matter of faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior is the salvation of our souls! God has promised anyone if they believe on Christ as their Savior, he will forgive their sins and save their souls! That is, save their souls in the sense that he will not have them thrown in the lake of fire, but instead live with him in peace for all eternity!

There is a point in time when people do exercise faith in Christ and there will be a point in time when God judges all men with the saved going into the eternal state with him, while the unsaved will be thrown into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels. **The end of our faith is that day when our souls will not be thrown into the lake of fire, but go into the eternal state. It will be the bringing of the whole matter of faith in Christ and the salvation of our souls to a close – forever!**

BBB. We have everlasting life.

“*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*” John 6:47 - αμην αμην λεγω υμιν ο πιστευων εις εμε εχει ζωην αιωνιον.

Amen, amen is used to get our attention and listen to what he has to say. Now what we have here is the present active participle of *pisteuo*, to **believe**, and the present active indicative of *echo*, to **have**. Now from what we know the action of the present participle, to believe, takes place at the same time as the action of the main verb, to have. **So what this is telling us is that we have eternal life at the very moment that we believe on Christ as our Savior!**

CCC. We will never perish.

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:15 - ινα πας ο πιστευων εις αυτον μη αποληται αλλ εχη ζωην αιωνιον.

In context we have Christ being lifted up on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, for the purpose that anyone who believes in him will never perish, but have eternal life. Again we have the present active participle of **believe** used with the present active indicative of **have** eternal life telling us that the two occur at the same time. We have eternal life the moment we believe on Christ as our Savior.

We also have hina plus the subjunctive introducing a purpose clause. Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins for the purpose that anyone who believes on him will not perish! They will not be destroyed in the lake of fire. We also want to note that their volition is preserved by the use of the active voice, for they must choose, they must make their own decision to believe on Christ.

DDD. No condemnation to those in Christ.

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: 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 - ο πιστευων εις αυτον ου κρινεται ο δε μη πιστευων ηδη κεκριται οτι μη πεπιστευκεν εις το ονομα του μονογενουσ υιου του θεου

The **first** use of **condemned** is the present passive indicative of *krino* and its **second** use is in the perfect passive indicative. *Krino* is to judge, to make a decision after hearing all the evidence. From that comes the judgment, krisis, the sentence, and then the carrying out of the punishment.

Now it says that those who have believed on Christ as their Savior are not condemned. The reason why is that Christ bore our sins on the cross; he became the substitute for our sins; he was our sin-bearer; he was judged by God for our sins, and he bore the punishment for our sins on the cross. Therefore there is now no condemnation to us. *“There is therefore now **no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1*

But the one who has not believed on Christ is already condemned. He is bearing his own condemnation and subsequent punishment because he has not accepted Christ's atoning death on his behalf and as his substitute. As such, he will have to bear his punishment in the lake of fire.

EEE. God wants us to know we have eternal life.

*“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **know** that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:13* - ταυτα εγραψα υμιν τοις πιστευουσιν εις το ονομα του υιου του θεου ινα ειδητε οτι ζωην εχετε αιωνιον και ινα πιστευητε εις το ονομα του υιου του θεου.

The Apostle John is writing this letter to believers in Christ and he uses hina plus the subjunctive mood

for the purpose that they may know that they have eternal life. To **know** is the perfect active subjunctive of *oida*. Now *oida* is one of those words for knowledge, but it goes beyond the idea of factual knowledge to the place where one has a full and complete understanding of the concept.

There are some groups in Christianity, and many Christians, who say that one can never be sure that one has eternal life. Some say that you can lose your salvation if you sin, others say that you can never really know for sure that one is eternally saved, even if they have believed on Christ. Others say that you have to believe on Christ and do something else to be saved, and even then, you can never know if you have done enough to be saved.

But here, the Apostle John, casts all that aside and **tells us that we have eternal life simply and only because we have believed on Christ!** Even to those who have just believed on his name! *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God”.*

So what he's telling us, along with all the rest of the NT, is that forgiveness of sins, salvation, and the guarantee of eternal life comes to anyone for simply believing on Christ, even believing on his name! *“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 But not only do we have salvation because we have believed on Christ as our Savior, but **he wants us to know that we have eternal life!** And the present tense of *echo*, to **have**, tells us that we already have eternal life now!

Pastor Mike