

July 2011 Newsletter

We Walk By Faith

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 ιησους 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 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 exete 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 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 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 orist passive imperative of *airo*. The **second** command is *bletheti*, the orist passive imperative of *ballo*. We notice that both words have the same grammatical construction; they are both orist 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 orist 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 *dialogismoi poneroi* for evil thoughts, tending toward the idea of sexually impure thoughts, carnality, etc.. While Mark has *dialogismoi 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!**

