

October 2019 Newsletter - True Faith

When the trial keeps on grinding you down; and adding to it other trials, then it really becomes difficult to keep the perspective of faith, and to keep the negative thoughts out of our minds. But this is what we must do. It is a mental discipline, although we're not too successful at times with it, but we need to keep applying our minds to make the conscious choice to believe God's Word, and to not let negative, faith destroying thoughts come into our minds. Even Job had some successes along this line. There were times that he was gripped with fear, worry and bitterness; and times when he waxed strong in faith.

8. Faith asks, seeks and knocks.

Another look at **active faith**, or faith in action, is found, (along with many other passages), in Matthew 7:7,8, where it tells us to ask, seek and knock. The words **ask, seek and knock** are all in the present active imperative, which tells us a lot. **First of all**, we see that it is a command that Christ has given us to do them. **Secondly**, it is done by the exercising of the will. **Thirdly**, they're something that we're to be doing continually. *"Keep on asking, keep on seeking, and to keep on asking".*

The next thing that we see is, that **the results of the actions of asking, seeking and knocking are all in the future indicative; with two in the passive and one in the active. The future indicative always stresses the certainty of the action occurring in the future.** These three things will occur. As I've said before, **when God says something will be it will be!** So we have, *"Keep on asking, and you will receive (passive voice); keep on seeking, and you will find (active voice); keep on knocking, and the door will be opened (passive voice) by God."*

Now they switch over to the present active participle to show these believers are **exercising them as a way of life**. Here we have believers, who, as a practice, are continually asking God, continually seeking after things and continually knocking on doors of opportunity, or for guidance, all as a pattern and practice of their Christian life.

Now we see an interesting thing, **the results of these three actions are all stated**, and are in the present active indicative. **Which tells us that they are continuously getting the things that they are asking for; continuously finding the things that they are seeking and continuously having doors opened for them!** What this tells us is that it pays off! The day to day reality for them is that these things are continually being realized, as the fulfillment of the things that they are doing in response to the commands of Christ. So that we find that it is not only pleasing to God to obey his Son, but that there are real benefits in doing so.

9. Examples where faith is to be exercised.

So many Christians think that faith is to be exercised only when believing on Christ, and maybe in some big trial, but we have here some of the areas where faith is to be exercised:

In prayer
Under pressure
In a trial
Living in a degenerate society
Loss of loved ones, friends, by death or otherwise
While one is sick, injured, or recovering

While listening to the Word of God
In business decisions
In career changes
In seeking God's guidance
While between jobs, or looking for a job
Maintenance and repair, around the house and the cars
Raising children, family problems
In our mental attitude towards life each day
Advancing towards God's grace objectives
Recovering from carnality or reversionism
While working, selling, or running the business
To appropriate God's grace blessings
When facing a threat, fear, or danger
During the sickness, trial, or injury of a loved one
Serving the Lord in a ministry, or in one's capacity
In dealing with other people's bad mental attitudes, or sinful conduct
In taking the initiative and advancing in life
In resisting Satan in the angelic conflict
In economic hardships, or hard times
In natural disasters
In pleasing God
In times of uncertainty
When living under a tyrannical government
In discharging one's duties and responsibilities
In the handling of money
In the intake of God's Word, and it's application

10. Concepts concerning faith.

Faith is a choice. One chooses to believe or not.
It is not an operation of the senses, nor the rationalizing of the mind.
It has no doubts in it. Faith says it's true.
Unbelief, not doubt, is the antithesis of faith.
Doubt is the wavering between faith and unbelief.
Faith is the confidence that something will be, will come to pass.
Ultimately, biblical faith is in a person - *Yahweh*, the God of the universe.
Faith becomes trust, depending on that person.
Faith can look to the person's attributes, his integrity, his power, etc..
It looks towards the possibilities, not the problem.
It looks towards God's ability, not our inability.
It needs to be persuaded from time to time.
It needs to be convinced of God's intentions towards us, that they are good, by the persuasion of argument or the display of evidence.
It is persistent and perseveres.
It needs to be reminded of the fact that God is covenanted to us.
Encouragement by other believers is helpful to faith.
The Holy Spirit gives us faith.
The Word develops faith.
Prayer is a vehicle that develops faith.

Spiritual activity (works) proceeds out of faith.

Faith is a sign of the new nature created by God.

Faith is concentration on the Word of God.

Faith focuses on the Lord, his Word; blocking out the rest.

It can grow, develop and become completed.

Faith is the means by which the power of the Holy Spirit is channeled into the believer who has come to the end of his works of power.

Only faith works with grace. It is the only thing that responds to and corresponds with grace. Man's works reject grace, and grace rejects man's works.

Faith says, "I can't, but God can".

Faith is in the circle with grace and truth.

Faith must always have an object, God and his Word.

taken away by Satan. We will always be able to believe; but he will try to exercising it.

It cannot be

keep us from

Faith looks to God and his

essence as the basis for trusting him. *Yahweh* is:

-Sovereign - He is in total control and has a plan for my life.

-Righteous - All his dealings with me are good.

-Justice - He will always be fair with me.

-Love - His love for me is perfect and complete.

-Eternal - My faith is safe, because he will live forever, always has, always will.

-Omnipotent - He has the power to handle every situation in my life.

-Omnipresent- He is with me wherever I go.

-Omniscient - He possesses all knowledge, and has all the answers for me.

-Immutable - He never changes, so I can count on him.

-Veracity - Always truthful, making him totally reliable.

Faith has activity. Activity is not to be a substitute for faith, nor is it to be mixed with faith, for that would change the character of faith. But activity proceeds out of faith! Faith motivates the believer to Biblical works.

Faith is not our contribution to our salvation; God saved us solely by his grace. He saved us while we were unable to do anything at all. We simply trusted him. Faith appropriated God's grace.

The perspective of **works** is **man-oriented**. While the perspective of **grace** is **God-oriented**; and so is the perspective of faith. Man usually only exercises faith, when he has come to the end of himself, the end of his works, in trying to solve his problems. And this is faith, when a man no longer wills, tries, or works, but only trusts. Man has a hard time exercising faith, because he is so oriented to, and reliant upon himself, while faith relies on God. And is to be the normal Christian life.

Faith is to be developed in the thought life, by refusing to entertain thoughts of doubt, fear, worry, etc.; and by focusing the mind on the promises of God...We have a mutual mandate from God to encourage each other in our faith...We can always believe, regardless of the situation...We advance in the Christian life by faith; going from one grace objective to the next...It is our entrance into Heaven.

11. The dynamic of faith in our prayers.

"And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive." Matthew 21:22. The words *pos* and *hosos* together speak of a quantity of number, and refer to the idea of "*as many as*" you will ask for in prayer. **It has the idea of a condition being fulfilled; and the condition being stated**

first of all is asking; we must ask God. The word for **ask** is *aiteo* and refers to the request that is made by an inferior party to a superior party. In the dative case of to **pray**, *en te proseuche*, we have the instrumental of means by which we ask God, by prayer. "*And all things whatsoever you shall ask, by means of prayer.*" **Prayer is the vehicle of our requests.**

Now the conditional idea really comes through. The believer would like to have things in life, but he is faced with a choice. He can go after them in his own strength, his own works, doing it all by himself without God's help thank you; not caring about God's will in the matter, nor, knowing if he will get them, but if he does, it will be by his own power. Or, he can ask God for them.

So the first condition is that we must ask God for the things that we want, if we want to have them; and we ask by means of prayer. By the way, there is no limit on the number of things that we can ask for, nor restriction on the category of things. "*All things, whatsoever*", opens it all up for the believer. But now we see the **second condition** is brought out in this matter of getting the things we ask for, and that's the matter of faith. **The believer, while he is praying to God, must believe that he will receive it!** The word for **believe** here is the present active participle of *pisteuo*. And what this shows is that faith is not only to be an active part of the believer's life, but his prayer life also. **He is to be continually living his life by faith, and praying by faith!** With the active voice, it tells us that the believer must **make a conscious choice to believe**, while he is praying. It isn't a matter of feeling what faith might feel like, or to have some emotion; **but a volitional decision to believe that he is going to get what he has asked for**, and that's what he decides to do; he believes that he will get it; that it will come true.

Another thing about the present participle is that its action occurs at the same time as the action of the main verb, which in this passage is **to ask**. In other words, **the believer, while he is in prayer asking God for things, must, at the same time be believing that God will grant them.**

"*Whatsoever things we ask by means of prayer*", is in the subjunctive mood, which speaks of **the potentiality of the matter**. We might ask God for things, and then again, we might not. But if we do, then we must be sure that our requests are accompanied by the mental attitude of faith; believing that we will get them. And if they are, and if we do, then we will receive them. The future active indicative of *labano*, **to receive, speaks of the certainty of an event or action occurring at some time in the future.**

We see from this that **faith becomes the guarantee in the matter of receiving our prayer requests**. God might grant our requests, if our faith is shaky, or not there at all, because it might fit in with his Plan, or out of his mercy; and this might be somewhat speculative. But God will grant them, if asked in faith. This is the same idea as found in Heb.11:1, "*Faith is the assurance of things hoped for...*" Faith guarantees that we will have what we have asked for. So, in this matter of faith, we can see how important of a dynamic it is, because it has the capability of changing our prayers into settled matters.

12. Some synonyms for faith.

Committing - Looks at the volitional decision to put a matter into the Lord's hands.

Depending - Counting on the Lord's faithfulness.

Trust - Helpless dependence on the Lord.

Hope - The confident mental attitude that good things will happen to you in the future.

Waiting - The mental attitude of faith from the time of the request until its fulfillment.

Patience - The mental attitude of faith while under a trial.

Leaning - A relying upon the Lord to hold you up.
 Following - Trusting in the Lord's plan and leadership.
 Believing - The verb form of faith.
 Resting - Total reliance on the Lord and the mental attitude it brings.
 Relying - Same as depending. Looks to his faithfulness.
 Looking to - Another synonym for faith.
 Confidence - Faith developed to completion.
 Praying - An expression of faith.
 Call out - Another expression for faith.
 Cast your burden - A pictorial mechanic of faith.
 Cry out - An intensified concept motivated by faith.
 Confident statements - Confident statements towards the future are statements of faith.
 Put in the Lord's hands - Expression of faith.
 Boldness - Confidence of faith before God.
 Walk with God - Living by faith.
 Persistent - Faith that won't let go.
 Looking to the City - Stabilizing view towards eternity.
 Pleasing the Lord - Only done by faith.
 The Christian's victory - Over death, Satan and the world.
 The Shield - Metaphor for faith using the armor concept.
 As a breastplate - With love.
 As eating - The metabolizing of God's Word by faith.

All of these speak of faith, different aspects of it, in different situations, but still faith.

13. The possibility thinking of faith

*"Everything is possible for him who believes", Matthew 9:14-27. This passage is in the context of the son who was possessed by a demon spirit. The father had brought the boy to the disciples to have them cast the spirit out, but they couldn't; so he brought the boy to the Lord. He asked the Lord, "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us" Mark 9:22b. **If you can**, is a first class condition and really states, "If you can do anything, and you can". He believed that the Lord could do it. Now the Lord said back to him, "If you are able to believe", "If you have the ability to believe", and you do, (then) all things are possible to the one who believes". To which the man immediately cried out with tears, "I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief."*

What this tells us is that the man had the ability to believe, which he affirmed that he did. But he also had a problem with **unbelief**, *apistia*. **Doubt** is where one wavers back and forth between the two. **What this verse does is take us into other worlds, worlds where all things are possible**, (things that are within the realm of reality; and that they can become real by faith. "*The one who believes*", is in the present active participle of *pisteuo*, which looks at the one who exercises faith as living by faith, as a way of life. And note the use of the active voice, which tells us that **the individual has made a choice**, a decision, an act of the will to believe. "*If you are able to believe, (and you are), all things are possible to the one who believes.*"

This admonition to use faith is in itself an encouragement to our faith, especially when we see how much can be accomplished by the exercising of our faith. **This passage also tells us about the faith of Jesus Christ. He was *the believing one*; to whom all things were possible, because of his faith.**

14. The Triad of grace, faith and truth.

A triad is a group of three persons or things, but for our purpose becomes a trilogy. A group of three literary or dramatic compositions, each subject separate and complete in itself, but continuing the same general subject.

The subject in view here is, how God deals with man in this matter of saving him and blessing him. We know it is by grace, but we also need to know the role that faith and truth play in this. So we have the trilogy of **grace, faith and truth**; all three subjects separate and complete in themselves, but all three intricately united, connected to each other to bring God's blessings to us.

There are two ways that God can and does deal with us: 1) in his justice, or, 2) by his grace. In **justice** he pays back to man according as our actions deserve. The problem with that is that our actions are either human good, or human bad. Both are repugnant to a Holy God; and both will incur his wrath and judgment. Either way, there is no opportunity in them for blessing. But in **grace**, God deals with us in a manner that we don't deserve; nor do we merit it, nor can we work for his blessings. Instead God does things for us on the basis of it being a gift. When dealing with the matter of a gift, it is not the character of the one receiving the gift that is the issue, but the character of the one receiving the gift.

If God was ever brought into question on this matter, (of dealing with his creatures on the basis of justice or grace), and he certainly was by Satan in Job 2,3, the matter would be solved along the lines of jurisprudential logic. Job 1:9-11; 2:3-5. God is enthroned in Heaven above all his subjects, both angels and men. He may have different roles and relationships to his different creations, but the one thing above all is **his position as Judge and Ruler of the universe**. As Judge and Ruler, he must deal with all his subjects on the basis of his justice. And this means that he must give to them as their actions deserve. It's only right; it's only fair; it's justice!

And all this is true, but there is also the logic that is true, *"Don't I (God), as an individual, have the right to give somebody a gift?"* The angels of God look at each other quizzically and reply, "Yes! *Yahweh* has the right to give somebody a gift, if he wants to, and still be righteous, still be just." The angels of Satan discuss it among themselves, and with a begrudging concession, admit the same thing, God has the right to give somebody a gift; to be gracious to them; to do things for them. Probably walking away muttering, 'as long as he's still just, he can do whatever he wants to for someone, if it doesn't conflict with his justice'. Knowing full well the nature of men and our propensity to sin.

To keep it short, in the matter of sin, God fully dealt with sin and satisfied his justice, when his Son died on the cross as the atonement for our sins. Now that his justice has been satisfied, he can deal with us on the basis of grace. But there has to be a certain standard adhered to for grace to be grace. Works are works, and grace is grace; and never the twain shall meet. So, for grace to keep its character of grace, it must be: separate from and reject all our works; and it must be centered on the concepts of being: undeserved, unearned and unmerited with all the emphasis being on the character of God.

And that's where the faith of man comes in. It has no merit in it. It certainly is not a work, although it motivates to works. It is not a wage that one earns. It is not based upon any individual trait or strength: being rich, poor; smart, stupid; popular, unpopular; talented, untalented; moral, immoral; hard-worker, lazy; educated, uneducated; pretty, ugly, etc.. People have all kinds of traits, yet, faith has nothing to do with them at all. Handsome people have faith, but so do ugly people. Rich people have faith, but so do poor people.

You see, the one thing that all of God's people have is faith, the ability to believe. It is totally non-meritorious, for the merit comes from the object of the faith, not the faith itself. And by faith, all of man's traits; his strengths and his weaknesses, are rejected. The person simply believes, and that's it! And out of all the things that a man has, or is able to do, this is the only thing that has no merit in it; and one that has no basis for judging, as with man's works; and, it has no basis for boasting. You will always find men boasting about what they have and what they do, 1 John 2:16, but there is no basis for a man boasting about his faith. What's there to boast about faith? It's not a work. It's not an activity. It's not something that he has earned, or worked for. It's just faith! It has no merit, for it's not based upon him.

Now the third important thing in this trilogy is Truth. (By the way, truth is supplied to us from God in his grace). Whether the truth, as revealed to us from God, is in its entirety, the Word of God; or, the many promises that it contains; or, the teachings of the Word; or doctrinal rationale, principles, viewpoint, or opinions; it's all classified as truth. Now faith always has to have an object. For faith to be faith, there has to be an object. And that object always has to be truth. The truth of God's Word!

So getting back to the matter of God blessing us by his grace, we see the importance that faith in the truth of God's Word has. *"From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."*, John 1:16. Christ came to us, *"full of grace and truth"*, John 1:14b. *"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; grace and truth go before you."* Psalms 89:14. So is faith important? In this matter of being blessed by God, we see how important faith is! For God will only bless us by grace; that is how he does it. And faith, not our works, becomes the basis for being blessed by grace. **But for us to have faith, we must have something to believe; we must have truth.**

15. Faith in the relationship to the unseen

Faith is that state of mind, which accepts the existence of something, without seeing it, and without having to have it proven to you. It accepts as fact that something is, or will be! It does so, without any of the empirical senses, such as: seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, or smelling. And apart from the function of the mind: rationalizing, analyzing, studying, deducting, etc..

For example, Heaven exists. The average man cannot accept this, because he cannot see it with his own eyes, nor can he prove it by any concept of rationalism. But faith says, I can accept this as being true. **I accept as fact that Heaven exists.** I do not have to see it with my eyes, nor do I have to have it proven to me by deductive reasoning, nor any other concept. I simply accept as fact that Heaven exists. That is my faith. That is faith.

Now we go on from there. God exists; Christ exists; God is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and millions of other spiritual concepts including the doctrines and promises of God. God will bless me; God will take care of me; God will protect me, etc.. There is no way that we could accept as fact that God created the heavens and earth by seeing them with the eyes, or prove it by the deductive reasoning of science (knowledge). We accept it as fact by faith. We believe that God created the heavens and earth, Hebrews 11:3. The heavens are the handiwork of God. I cannot prove that, I can only believe that. The old saying, "Seeing is believing", is not true! Seeing is accepting as fact that something is true, by one of the senses that we possess, where we discern that something is real, true factual, by observation. But faith accepts something as true, without seeing! **Seeing is not believing, and believing is not seeing.**

Virtually everything that has existed on earth, and even exists now; in relationship to us, is unseen. And

everything that is in the future to us is unseen. You say we have our history books and they tell us what has gone on before. But how do you know they're true? Were you there? Did you see it with your own eyes? No! Some other man saw it, and wrote it down. How do you know that he wasn't lying; or deceived, or mistaken? You take his word by faith. Science only accepts the validity of something by logic, or by principles of observation. But biblical faith accepts something as true, because God says so. Man wants to see it to prove it, without having to believe it. He wants to believe it after he sees it. But faith believes it before he sees it. In fact, faith doesn't have to see it at all!

When God promises something to us, or when we ask God for something in prayer, at that time we do not have it. We will receive it at some time in the future, but we do not have it at that moment. **To us, it is future, unseen: but that does not mean that it is unreal. It is only unrealized. But faith says, it will exist in the future.** Remember, faith accepts as fact that something is, or that it will be. **And the mental state of faith keeps on accepting that this thing will be, until it finally is.** Then when you have it, when you finally see it, then the concept of faith no longer is; for now the senses see that it is real. Faith accepts as fact that something presently exists, such as God, Heaven, etc.; and it accepts as fact that something will exist, that it will come to be in the future: the fulfillment of God's promises, the Age to come, the Resurrection, Eternity, the blessings that God has in store for us, and the fulfilling of all the grace objectives that God has for us. The mental attitude of faith does not have to have it proven to it, nor does it have to see it; it simply accepts as fact, because God said so. In fact, it is so confident that the thing is true, that it will rely on it, depend on it, count on it, trust in it, act on it, throw one's self on it. **This is what faith is, a mode of perception, of accepting something as being true, as existing, or existing in the future, without having to see it, without having to have it proved.**

16. Faith in the Word, the channel for the power of God.

Faith is not only the channel for the grace blessings of God, but also for the power of God. *"May the God of hope (Yahweh) fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit". Romans 15:13.* First experienced when we believed on Christ. At that moment in time, the Holy Spirit entered into the body of the believer and regenerated him. A mighty working of the power of the Holy Spirit.

When we are talking about the spiritual dynamics of: love, joy, peace, hope, confidence towards the future, we're talking about power. Think of the power it takes to elevate the mind to this level; contrasted against the morass of depression, discouragement and despair. Romans 15:13, makes it very clear that the joy of God, the peace of God, the hope that comes from God, are channeled to the believer in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, as that believer exercises faith in the Word.

In the evil day, when the believer comes under the attack of the devil, he is to stand in faith. And, in so doing, he will be able, that is, he will have the power to stand up to the most powerful created being in the universe, and defeat him! This is a mighty outworking of power brought about by faith. The devil pits himself against the believer to destroy his mind, his body, his family, everything that he has! And to come out of this spiritual combat with the victory, takes power! And the believer has this power, when he exercises faith in the Word of God. Just like the man who brought his son to the disciples to have them cast the demon out of him, but they couldn't! So he brought him to the Lord, for the Lord to do it, because he had the faith and the power. Mark 9:14-23. Even faith in our prayers is an outworking of power, for in a sense, our requests are granted, brought into existence, (a feat of power itself), when we exercise faith.

17. Faith exercised in trials.

Regardless, of whether we're talking about the kind of trials that are designed to bring our and purify our faith, or the trials that are designed to find out what's in us, the believer is to exercise faith. Exercising faith is not "gritting one's teeth", or, "gutting it out". These are the kind of concepts that one would find in trying to handle a problem, or go through a situation in his own strength.

For the Christian, he is to exercise faith in the Word of God. A daily, sometimes moment by moment , claiming of the promises of God. And, if he or she wakes up in the morning to find that the trial is still there, he keeps on believing the promises of God and the doctrine that he has learned. This is to be the approach that Christians are to take, when confronted by trials; this is how they endure them, and this is how they move through them.

The trial may be resolved by applying some doctrinal solution, but if not, then one still continues on in the trial exercising faith in the promises of God. One might also have to put on the armor of God to deal with the satanic attacks while in the trial, as happens so often, but this too is a doctrinal solution to a given problem.

18. Faith exercised in grief

One of the hardest things to go through is, the death of a loved one, a friend, relative, or spouse.

This is not to be a study on the nature and dynamics of grief, which is such a powerful emotion, and destructive, if not allowed to have it's day, but on the biblical use of faith, while we are going through our grief. Remember, that the ancient people of God all suffered grief at one time or other in their lives, and went through it all without therapy, counseling sessions, or grief seminars. This is not to criticize those things, because they can be very helpful. But to ask ourselves, **“What was it that pulled them through”?** **It was their faith in the promises of God!** When they got hold of the promises that dealt with the resurrection, etc., they believed God's Word, and this believed Word (metabolized doctrine) provided their souls with the spiritual energy, which comforted and strengthened them. And this in addition to the ministry of the Holy Spirit to us in dying grace.

Paul wrote about this problem to the believers in Thessalonica, telling them he didn't want them to be ignorant about their loved one's who were believers, who had fallen asleep (died); nor did he want them to grieve like the rest of mankind, the unsaved, who have no hope. And then he goes on to tell them why, and about the resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4.

All believers in Christ will be raised to eternal life with new bodies, and will live forever and ever. And that also includes our loved one's in the Lord. That is our comfort, and that is our hope. We have the confident expectation of being re-united again with our loved in the Kingdom of Christ, beautiful and glorified. All of us! But the unsaved have no such hope, that's why they mourn as they do. When they die, they go to Hell awaiting the Day of Judgment, where they will be raised up out of Hell to be judged by Christ, and then be thrown into the Lake of Fire for all eternity. **So, for the believer in Christ, we can see how our faith in the Word of God, can strengthen, comfort, encourage us, and give us hope, during the time of our grief over loved one's lost to death.**