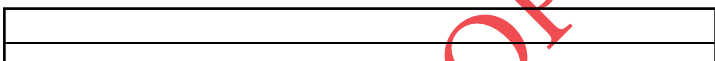
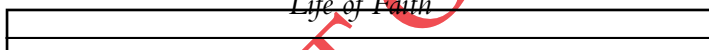




OUR LIFE OF FAITH



*Faith is Important Because We Have Received Salvation into a
Life of 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 KJV

The above reference teaches that we are saved through faith into a life of faith. I believe we could call it a lifestyle and still be accurate, because the nature of the life of salvation is that of faith day by day.

Here Apostle Paul was writing to the Roman church, as the Holy Spirit set it for us today also since we are members of the same body of Christ, by that same Spirit.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and

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have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”¹ 1 Corinthians 12:13
KJV

What was done for them in Christ is what has been done for us through the same Christ. What the Apostle said to that Roman Church referenced something the Holy Spirit revealed to an Old Testament Prophet called Habakkuk.

“Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but *the just shall live by his faith.*” Habakkuk 2:4

The Holy Spirit had opened the eyes of the heart of this Prophet, and he saw ahead that those who would be called the just or righteous ones, would be living a life fully branded with faith in its character. It would be a faith-life.

The life of the righteous was defined and designed by God to be a life consistent with faith in every way. It would not be a day in faith and another without faith. It would not be faith at salvation, and then we are left to our wit and will to grope our way through life. It would be a life in the light of the Word of God all through.

The Experience of Faith

Many times, people confuse a heightened ecstasy or feeling of belief or a strong expectation on God to be faith.

This is not what the Bible says about faith. An emotional feeling is bound to fluctuate. On the contrary, faith is based

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on God's unchanging Word.

“So then *faith comes by hearing*, and hearing *by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 KJV

The Modern King James Version says, “*Then faith is of hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*”

Apostle Paul said nothing about faith coming by feeling or by placing creative expectations on God! Even in prayer, faith is not based on creative expectations on God.

Asking God for the death of your enemy is contrary to

Asking God for the death of your enemy is contrary to His Word and so God will not answer that.

His Word and so God will not answer that. You can readily see therefore there is no strong faith in God for the death of your enemy.

Jesus said, “But I say unto you, *Love your enemies*, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;” Matthew 5:44

And so, you will not successfully use His name to pray for the demise of your enemies. Love does not delight in evil. There is no use making that prayer at all regardless of how you feel about your enemies; not to God anyways, and not in the name of Jesus either. You can however pray and believe for His protection and preservation in your life against the plots and attacks from your adversaries because

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He promised it.

“I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: My God; in Him will I trust. Surely, He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: *His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*”

Psalm 91:2-4

This makes it so easy to see why faith can be a constant and consistent way of spiritual life. It is firmly based on the Word of God that is *never changing* in character and *ever the same*.

Faith In God Is Integrity

Since faith in God is based on God’s unchanging Word, it imparts a character of integrity. *Therefore, a person of faith will always be a person of integrity because faith makes them that way.*

If you want to grow in integrity, just have a commitment to God’s Word. It comes as a by-product.

“Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, *that delights greatly in his commandments*. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: *his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*”

Psalm 112:1,7

Look at this beautiful conclusion toward the close of the

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book of Ecclesiastes.

“The words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the Masters of assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd.” Ecclesiastes 12:11

They never change, they never move, they have dependable integrity, and they are given by one person. They are as nails fastened!

If you put your faith in how you feel, you will never be able to put your faith in God. You will never have your faith avail anything before God that way.

Faith that moves mountains is itself a faith that cannot be moved. It is based on a Word that does not change. It

proceeds from a heart that is stable enough to challenge a mountain. The mountain will move before that person is moved!

If you put your faith in how you feel, you will never be able to put your faith in God.

The reason we have Scriptures is so that we can have hope because God is not going to alter what He said.

To base your faith on feelings or imaginations would make you extremely unstable. This way, you will be unable to prevail over the circumstances that you should overcome. Your sentiments or expectations only change your attitude.

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How will a faith that is based on prevailing circumstances ever change those circumstances?

“So then faith *comes by hearing* and hearing *by the word of God*.” Romans 10:17

The spoken word of God will let you hear what God is saying. When you hear it, believe God!

The Word of God spoken has that divine characteristic of producing faith in your heart. And when we speak the Word of God, it is just as much the Word of God as when God spoke it. It does not become the word of a man.

The spoken word of God will let you hear what God is saying. When you hear it, believe God!

Faith in God has no alternative source.

Optimism is not the source of faith. A good feeling is not the source of faith.

Praying should be seen as the use of faith or an act of faith, rather than the source of it.

The Bible does not say anything about faith coming by praying as some have thought it to be.

Praying should be seen as the use of faith or an act of faith, rather than the source of it.

Faith comes by hearing. The difference is clear.

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This, therefore, means that there is no amount of praying and begging God to give us faith that will avail any faith to us because the word of God is clear about this. What is written in the scriptures is so that we may have hope always that what God said will not change at any time.

We need to learn to get God's things through God's ways or else we find ourselves making prayers whose answers seem to never come, then we wonder why and get frustrated.

We need to know that, on the contrary, praying without faith in the first place, may prove disappointing as we will soon see!

“With the heart man believes unto righteousness.” ^{Romans}
10:10 MKJV

This is a right standing before God. The Weymouth's New Testament puts it this way: “For *with the heart men believe and obtain righteousness*, and with the mouth, they make confession and obtain salvation.”

Faith is that which validates what is in our hearts and what we say before the throne of God!

Outside of faith in God, your prayer life will be unacceptable before God. To believe that there is a God to pray to is ready faith. Where there is faith, there is validation before God.

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<i>To believe that there is a God to pray to is ready faith.</i>	Approaching God requires simple faith that God is. What you approach God for requires faith in what God said about the matter too.
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Sometimes we are accepted in approaching God but then rejected in what we approach God for or how we approach Him e.g., approaching God for the wrong thing as the demise of another person is a sure waste of time. How we approach God can also be wrong, such as having unforgiveness in our heart.

“Therefore I say unto you that what things soever ye desire *when you pray, believe that you receive* them and you shall have them. *And when you stand praying, forgive*, if you have anything against anyone.” Mark 11:24,25 KJV

Because we know God’s stand through the word about the times we stand praying, faith in our hearts includes forgiveness for others.

I wonder how many devoted moments of prayer were hindered by the unforgiveness of the devout! We would be amazed at how prosperous our prayer lives become just by obeying the Lord to be ever-forgiving. Young Christians I have found, forgive quickly. The older we get in the walk, many among us harden in our hearts when the realization sets in that getting saved did not immunize us from the disappointment and harmfulness of people and certain

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circumstances. Reluctance to forgive sets in like the bible says, “And because iniquity shall abound, *the love of many shall wax cold.*” Matthew 24:12. We must stand guard to not be changed by the times. We must forgive.

If you know what God said He can do, has done, and will do from his word, then you can base your faith on that when you approach God’s throne in prayer. The same scriptures guarantee that the answer is received when you pray: not after you pray.

Did you notice above that Jesus said “*when you pray*, believe that you receive..?” implying that the answer was granted when you prayed and not after, so that when we pray, we receive.

If you do not have faith in what God has said, you may even pray with fasting, trying to twist God’s arm to do what He has either rejected or already done. How long do you in your fair and balanced sense think it will take for this answer to come? Never! This is because asking for something God says he already has done or rejected is futile.

We should not worship our prayer or put our trust in our ability to pray more than we should worship God in spirit and in truth. In truth means, in the light of what He has said.

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In our ignorance, we often prefer to pray and ask amiss, and beg God to do things for us, rather than to know His Word and act on it to receive what is already perfected, whether it requires prayer or not. When we lack knowledge, we can be busy on a spiritual begging spree before God.

<i>The responsibility of receiving answers to our prayers is based on our faith as individuals.</i>		The responsibility of receiving answers to our prayers is based on our faith as individuals. We can pray and not believe that we have received what we desired in prayer. People fear this because, even though the Word of God reveals God's will, it is easier to
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blame unanswered prayers on "God's sovereign will, which who knows?" than to admit that we did not receive because we failed to understand His Word that we should receive when we pray.

It is faith to believe that when I prayed, I was not only heard and accepted, but I received what I desired when I prayed. This is faith working.

Everyone watching on the outside may think you are a truly prayerful person when you are an expert in begging God. In such cases, it is clear through the word of God that all such

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seeking of God demonstrates unbelief rather than faith.

Even you, might get confused; because you have more conviction about your devotion to your prayers, rather than your devotion to God's truth.

I have mostly used prayer as an example to learn faith because it is possibly the easiest and most common act of faith in the Church. True enough, if you do not pray, there is hardly any other area of life in which you will successfully use your faith in God productively.

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6

Believing in the existence of God is the easiest matter for any Christian because our faith is based on the reality of God. We believe He is, and therefore we come to Him in prayer.

Most of us stumble at the second half of that verse and yet that is where God's faithfulness in answering us lies. He is a rewarder of the people who diligently seek Him.

We cannot go the length of knowing what Jesus taught about praying in His name and fail to receive what we desired of the Father in prayer! It was His invitation in the first place, and therefore He taught about it.

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In the book of Hosea, the Bible says:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: *because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee*, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” ^{Hosea 4:6}

Oh, how so gravely serious God takes the knowledge of His Word!

Without the knowledge of God through his word, one or many may pray and be destroyed, nonetheless. One or many may even fast and yet still suffer destruction. He did not reject them for their prayerlessness, nor were they destroyed for their lack of fasting. He did not say that “my people are destroyed for not being in Church!”

However, from the book of proverbs, we are told:

“A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor: *but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.*” ^{Proverbs 11:9}

The life of the just, which is a life of faith, must be based on the accurate knowledge of God for it to produce any kind of deliverance: that is deliverance *from evil*, as well as deliverance *into* that which rightly belongs to us.

By deliverance here, we are not speaking of demons being cast out of the just. The just do not have demons. The just cast out demons!

But the just that lack the knowledge of God may not take their authority over demons, even though it has been given to them in the Name of Jesus.

Defeat is possible for the people of God when the choice is made to live outside of the knowledge of God's Word. This is the same Word that imparts faith. Put these together and you conclude that *faith has intelligent belief, conviction, and assurance based on God's Word of truth guaranteeing victorious outcomes.* It is not a step into the dark, but in the light of God's Word.

*The just
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demons. The
just cast out
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This, therefore, shows us that ignorance of God's word is a self-destructive force from which there is no excuse. No excuse since the Word of God is available.

Develop Your Own Faith in God

"The Just shall live by *his* faith." Habakkuk 2:4

Notice from this how you cannot use the knowledge that you do not have, any more than you can live by a faith you have not developed.

An account from the Gospel according to St. Mark reveals some of this through the life and ministry of the Lord to people in his hometown.

"Then He went out from there and came to His own

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country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to *teach* in the synagogue. *And many hearing Him were astonished*, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” *And they were offended at Him*. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” Now *He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.*” Mark 6:1-6 NKJV

When Jesus went to his hometown, the people listened to him, and rather than falling in line to believe the message he proclaimed and taught, they <i>were astonished and marveled</i> . We learn here that being in marvel and astonishment are not signs of believing.	<i>Being in marvel and astonishment are not signs of believing.</i>
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Eventually, they challenged him and made nonsense of his message. What was the result? “He *could* do no mighty work there.”

Mark does not say he ‘*did not*’ but that, he ‘*could not*.’