

## **Faith in Action**

**Opening Prayer** – Lord I ask that you bless each person here today and that you will prosper them and their families in the new-year. Dear Jesus, I ask that you will grant each one success in their endeavors as their endeavors, through faith in you, become what you would have each one do. Please bless the reading of your Word and quicken it to the hearts of those who hear your word today. I ask this in the mighty name of Jesus – Amen.

### **Why is Faith Necessary?**

Turn with me to:

#### **Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)**

*<sup>6</sup> But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

### **What is Faith?**

#### **Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith is made up of two components:

Belief and Action

In the Word of God the verb Believe is a present tense participle which means that it is an active faith that remains sustained. In short – Belief is not a one-time act. In John 3:16 the word tells us to believe on the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved.

Let's prove out this statement. Turn with me to:

#### **James 2:20 (NKJV)**

*<sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

Now look at vs. 26:

#### **James 2:26 (NKJV)**

*<sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

**James 2:14-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> *What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?*

<sup>15</sup> *If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,*

<sup>16</sup> *and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?*

<sup>17</sup> *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

Belief is not simply an acknowledgement of historical fact, nor simply an emotional disposition to trust Christ as your saviour rather; it has a component of obedience to act in accordance with the will of the Lord.

**HOMILETIC EXAMPLES HERE...**

- Helping families around you who are hungry or in need
- Exhorting and encouraging others as they exercise their gifts
- Watching the child of a single mom so she can get an education

**So how does faith work?**

As an illustration let's look at several of Jesus healing miracles to see if we can find a common theme...

**Matthew 9:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> *Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."*

**Matthew 9:20-22 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> *And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.*

<sup>21</sup> *For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."*

<sup>22</sup> *But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.*

**Matthew 9:27-29 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup> *When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"*

<sup>28</sup> *And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."*

<sup>29</sup> *Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."*

### **Matthew 15:25-28 (NKJV)**

<sup>25</sup> *Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"*

<sup>26</sup> *But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*

<sup>27</sup> *And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."*

<sup>28</sup> *Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

### **Acts 14:8-10 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> *And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.*

<sup>9</sup> *This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed,*

<sup>10</sup> *said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.*

In each case the person who would receive the healing was recognized as having the faith that they could be healed. Jesus did not force healing on anyone. The people that were healed desperately sought him out and believed that he could heal them.

For example: When Jesus healed the woman with an issue of blood he asked who touched him, despite the fact that he was being pressed about by many people. Jesus knew who she was but he wanted her to not just claim her healing but to profess it to others.

As we saw in the examples of the healing miracles of Christ; it is in the belief that God can do the miracle then acting on that faith, combined with the seekers belief that God can accomplish the miracle and seeking the miracle, that the righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith.

In short - Faith requires action... or as it is put in the book of James "Faith without works is dead" Don't let doubt rob you of your miracles... remember belief is active and must remain sustained

## **How does Faith Grow?**

### **Romans 1:16-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

<sup>17</sup> *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;*

Look closely at what this is saying here: Salvation is for those who believe. Belief here is an action and it tells us that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Now from faith to faith here means from the foundation of our faith in the Word of God to a higher level of faith imputed by God as we grow.

**So now Romans 10:17 will now be clear**

**Romans 10:17 (NKJV)**

*<sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Just as the hearing of the Word of God increases faith so too does the profession of faith increase the faith of others.

### **HOMILETIC EXAMPLES HERE...**

- **Telling others about what God has brought us through, helps to build the faith in others and removes the inhibition for others to tell of the great things he has done for them.**
  - **Blood Clot on Brain.**
  - **\$50 in pocket**
  - **Gas Gauge going up**
- **When we hear what the Word of God says and put it into practice we always see the benefits, we need to relate these experiences to others, not keep them to ourselves.**

### **CHECKPOINT**

**So what have we learned so far?**

- **First they must believe that the Lord can do what we ask**
- **Second we must take action in accordance with the will of the Lord**
- **Third there must be profession of faith**
- **Fourth we must seek to understand the mystery of faith through understanding the Word of God**

**Homiletic Example:** May people have said to me: “I think I have faith but I can’t seem to heal anyone...why?”

- 1) Both the person praying and the recipient must believe and profess their faith
- 2) Different people in the body have different gifts given by the Lord and you need to diligently seek his face to determine what they are

While we know the first statement is true based on Jesus example in the healing miracles what about the different Gift issue:

**Let’s take a quick look at the Spiritual Gifts and how they relate to our faith...**

**1 Corinthians 12:4-18 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

<sup>5</sup> There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

<sup>6</sup> And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

<sup>7</sup> But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*:  
<sup>8</sup> for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,  
<sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,  
<sup>10</sup> to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.  
<sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

### **The gifts are an expression of your faith in action**

**Seek the Lord and discuss it with your pastor to determine what your Giftings are...**

**Challenge: If you don't know who you are in the body of Christ and aren't exercising your faith, then what is the BODY Missing? EVERYONE has a part to play.**

**Note Pray first - Many people are unhappy spiritually because they are doing things that God never asked them to do in the first place...**

Regardless of your giftings, faith must be coupled with action.

Each member of the body must faithfully exercise their gifts as a stewardship from God as they grow from faith to faith (explain faith to faith)

Another example is illustrated in how the operation of faith applies to the five-fold ministry.

### **Romans 12:4-8 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

<sup>5</sup> so we, *being many*, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

<sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy in proportion to our faith*;

<sup>7</sup> or ministry, *let us use it in our ministering*; he who teaches, in teaching;

<sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

### **ELABORATE**

**We all need more faith...**

**Luke 17:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

**Ephesians 6:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

We strive for righteousness and as Christ has covered us with his blood, we are righteousness before the father, yet the enemy introduces doubt to us as we know our shortcomings, he plays on our feelings of unworthiness. Put on your armour, and profess your faith. When you exercise your faith God will consider you righteous.

Let's look at:

**Galatians 2:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

**Romans 4:20-22 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

<sup>21</sup> and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

<sup>22</sup> And therefore "*it was accounted to him for righteousness.*" as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

**Faith perfects us:**

**James 1:2-4 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

<sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

<sup>4</sup> But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

**Example: People in the Bible were called upon to exercise their faith, just as we are:**

**Hebrews 11: various (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "*and was not found, because God had taken him*"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

<sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,

<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

<sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,  
<sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

<sup>27</sup> By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

<sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

<sup>29</sup> By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

<sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

<sup>31</sup> By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

Just as those in the bible were called upon to exercise their faith so are you called today

Let's summarize what we have learned about the actions of faith:

- We must believe that the Lord can do what we ask
- We must take action in accordance with the will of the Lord
- We must profess our faith to others
- We must seek to understand the mystery of faith through understanding the Word of God
- We must exercising our spiritual gifts to strengthen the body and increase our faith
- We must hold fast to the promise that that faith protects us
- We must not lose faith in trials as the bible tells us that faith perfects us
- We must not lean to our own understanding

### **One final word of caution...**

Many times we allow our own experiences to limit God. The bible tells us that man's wisdom is God's foolishness. Just because an act of faith does not seem logical or possible does not mean that it is impossible to God. Don't stand in the way of faith exercise it.

### **This is my prayer for you from the Word of God:**

#### **1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

<sup>5</sup> that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

**Closing Prayer** – Heavenly father we thank you for your gifts and giving us someone worthy to believe in – in the person of your son Jesus. I humbly ask that in your graciousness that you will reveal to each person here today in the Body of Christ, how you would have each one of us exercise our faith for your glory. Please reveal to each person the gifts that you have given them as they seek your face. Thank you Lord. - AMEN