

Living By Faith  
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## Living By Faith

I'd like to continue talking about the reality of faith today. We started talking about and defining faith last week. We saw that faith is not the same thing as belief. Faith is not what your mind believes about God. Faith is what the mind of the Lord knows about himself. And when faith is operating in your heart it is nothing less than the mind of the Lord sharing his view with you.

Faith is something that is absolutely supernatural. It is something that does not exist in the heart or mind or eyes of the natural man. So much of the time, we Christians are trying to know spiritual reality through our five senses. But spiritual reality can not be accessed this way. Spiritual reality will never be touched with your hand or seen with your natural eye. You may see or touch the effects of spiritual reality, but the things that are spiritually real are not experienced with natural bodies and natural minds and natural senses.

But there *is* a way to know spiritual reality. There is a faculty, a sense, that accesses all things that God has established in his Son. That faculty is called faith -- the faith of the Son of God. And that faculty works in us to the degree, to the measure, that we give it to room to flood our hearts with his awareness, with his light. And that's always the issue when it comes to faith. Everybody says that they want God to show them the truth. Everybody says that they want to know the Lord. But wanting to know the Lord is the same as being willing to live by the faith of the Son of God. And to live by the faith of the Son of God one must be willing to see all things in his light. And in order to see all things in his light one must be willing to lose the darkness where we hide.

I know that that sounds simple. I know that probably all of us assume that our hearts are disposed to the Lord in this way. But nevertheless I submit to you tonight that the opposite is most often the case. Men love darkness for their deeds are evil. Men love darkness because that's where we can hide in our own ideas, and in our own understanding of God, of ourselves, of purpose.

I love Darkness. I have seen that about myself. I love to assume the best about myself and hide from the light that would prove otherwise. I love to hold tightly to the ideas that are most meaningful to me -- especially those ideas that have to do with God and eternal things. Those are the dark ideas that I love the most. I love to cry out to God for light even while I am holding so tightly to the darkness. I love to resist in my soul the very things that I am requesting with my mouth. The Lord has dealt with me on this issue many times. And we are all the same.

But to begin to find anything of truth, to begin to experience anything of faith, we have to start here. We have to at least understand that this is what we are. And we have to begin to turn our hearts to the Lord. Faith begins with the turning of the

heart. And the turning of the heart has every bit as much to do with what you are turning *away from* as it does who you are turning towards.

We cannot change ourselves. But we can turn from ourselves unto him. We can recognize something of what we are and what we are doing. We can face it, acknowledge it, hate it, and turn. This much we can do. This much we have to do or there will be no room in our souls for faith. **Faith begins with the turning of the heart**, not the turning of the mind, not even the turning of the will. The turning of the heart is something that is hard to describe. You almost have to experience it to understand what it is. But you don't have to understand it to begin to do it.

The turning of the heart begins with the acknowledgement of the problem. The beginnings of faith start in us alongside the recognition of our true situation. Scripture says it like this -- the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. True fear of the Lord will start any heart turning. **A true fear of the Lord will make room in the heart for faith.**

I wonder how much we fear Lord. I'm already on a rabbit trail, but it is an important one. I wonder how much we fear the Lord. Do you think you know the Lord? I mean *really* know him? I hope not. Paul says "anyone who thinks they know does not yet know as they ought". That's a statement that came out from the fear of the Lord. You think you're right about something? Do you think that one day God will vindicate you? Do you think that God is on your side?

In light of some recent events that are happening here, let me tell you all a quick story. Several years ago there was a man who had nothing but bad things to say about me and about my teaching. This man was in some ways a thorn in my side. And many people respected this man's opinion. Many occasions I tried to explain what the Lord was showing me, how the Lord was dealing with me, how the Lord was destroying me through his cross. In many occasions I tried to share faith with this man. And in every time, and in several ways, this man misrepresented, misunderstood, and misapplied everything that I was saying. In my view he did damage to the Lord's body. But more important to me at the time, he did damage to me.

One day after a particularly difficult situation with this person I remember going into my bedroom and shutting the door. This man had said some particularly untrue things about me and about my words and I was hurt and I was offended. And in addition to that, in this instance, more than any other time in my life, I knew that the things that I was saying were true. I'd started to see the Lord and this was the first time that I actually had anything at all true to say.

So I went into my room and closed the door and climbed onto my bed and got under the covers. And I began to cry out to the Lord. I began to tell the Lord all that this man was saying, all that he misrepresented, all that I was seeing, how true and real the cross was. And then I began to say to the Lord, "Lord I know that one day you will vindicate me. One day this man and all who are like him will see that I stood for you, that I stood for the truth. One day you will show him what he is doing now, and you will vindicate me in that day".

And then, like a loud thunder clap in my heart, the Lord rebuked me. "Jason, I WILL NEVER vindicate you. I will never vindicate your words or your life or your stance or your reputation. I have already vindicated my son. There is nothing more that

needs to be vindicated." It hit me like a ton of bricks. And I saw so clearly that everything I despise about this man was something that I am. By nature we are the same thing. By nature we were the same lie, the same misunderstanding, the same misrepresentation. By condemning this man I was condemning myself. By seeking to vindicate myself I was trying to vindicate the very thing that I hated.

Paul says in Romans

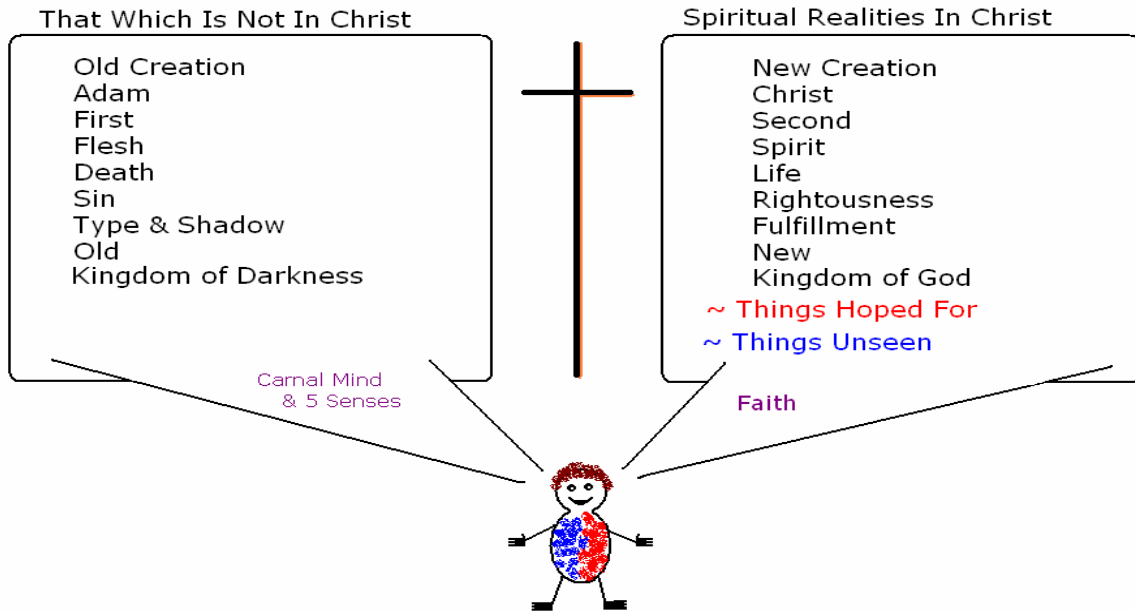
**Rom 2:1** *Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. 3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

Who are you O man!?!? That about sums it up. Who am I? That's a good question to ask yourself. Who am I? The answer to that question will determine whether faith has room in your soul. Who am I? Oh Lord, I am the lie. I am the problem. I am the darkness. This is the beginning of the fear of the Lord. This is the beginning of the turning of the heart, the humbling of a heart like a child. And with this kind of turning room is made for light. With this recognition and this willingness to accept things as they are, Jesus can be the author and finisher of our faith.

So faith begins to be in us his view of all things. Faith begins to work in us the evidence and the substance of things which cannot be seen. Faith begins to show us what it means to walk by faith and not by sight. We understand, little by little, how we can look not at the things which are seen, but at those things which are unseen. We understand, by faith, that the things which are seen were made to represent the things which can never be seen. We understand, by faith, that our hearts must be fixed on those things above and not on the things which are on the earth.

Faith opens up to us a whole new world of reality. With the coming of faith there is the dawning of the universe of Christ. With the increase of faith there comes the ability to abide in that land, to walk the length the depths the height and the breadth, to possess by faith that which God has freely given to you in Christ. "Lift up your eyes, Abraham...as far as you can see this Land, it has been given to you".

Remember the few weeks that we spent talking about the judgment? Remember how we drew the line down the center of the white board representing the cross. And each side represented the first and the second. And on the left side we had all of the things of the first. We had the first creation the first man the old covenant. We had natural minds, natural things, types and shadows, law, flesh, earth. On the right side of the line we had all the things of the second. We had a new man, a new creation, a new covenant, a new heavens and earth in Christ.



Here's what I'm trying to say about faith. Sight accesses, beholds, grows keenly aware of the things on the left side of that diagram. Sight. And not just the sight of the eyes. When the Scriptures says sight, they are referring to all natural faculties and physical senses. The old, the first, the dead, the things of the earth... these are accessed by sight.

But the new, the second, the living, the things of the heavens, the things that have been finished in Christ...these are accessed by faith. Notice I did not say that these are *believed in* by faith. Again, I am not talking about what you may happen to believe in. Honestly, it doesn't even matter what you believe in. It matters what faith has seen. When faith is functioning in your soul, it will shape and adjust and create and destroy various beliefs. Without faith your beliefs are just your thoughts. Without faith man's beliefs correspond to the things that man wants to be true.

So I'm not talking about beliefs being accessed by faith. I'm talking about a new life, a new realm, a new covenant, a new heavens being accessed by faith. I'm talking about you walking in the heavens, living in the spirit, walking in the light. These are realities for the Christian soul. These are not doctrines for the Christian mind or verses in a Christian book. These are realities that are meant to be the motivating, liberating, transforming realities that become so real to us by faith.

So, sight accesses the left side of the diagram. Faith accesses the right side of diagram. Even as site allows you to live in and experience the things on the left side of the diagram, so to faith allows you to live in and experience the things on the right side of the diagram. The left side of the diagram is not the present time, and the right side the future. These two sides have nothing to do with time. They have everything to do with the light or the mind or the faculties that are used to access what is real.

I hope that it has become quite obvious to you but, you see, nearly all of our problems in the body of Christ hinge on this issue. We claim to know the Lord, but we do not know him by faith. We claim to walk with the Lord, but we do not walk by

faith. We claim to have relationship with the Lord, but we do not know that relationship by faith. We claim to be righteous because of the Lord, but we do not experience that righteousness by faith. We claim to love the Lord, but we do not know the love that works in us by faith.

If we don't know these things by faith...what does that mean? That means that we have an understanding of relationship, love, walking with the Lord, etc., that are understood by and defined by sight. In other words we try to use our natural faculties and natural minds to understand, experience, and teach those things that can only be accessed by faith, by the mind of the Lord. We try to grow in our understanding of spiritual reality rather than grow in the spirit's understanding of reality. We think that classes, and books, and natural experiences are how we grow in faith. But these are the ways that we grow in sight.

I'm not trying to sound critical. We all need to face this. I'm not talking about someone else. I'm talking about everyone, myself included. I'm not just talking about what we do, I'm talking about what we are, and what we must die to by the cross. So I suppose you could say that I *am* being critical. But I am being critical of the Adamic man and his great deception. And I believe that my words are far weaker than the words of condemnation supplied by the Scriptures for the natural man.

I'm simply trying to explain something of the absolute necessity of faith. Faith is not optional in Christ. **Faith is how EVERYTHING that God has done is accessed and experienced. When these realities are not accessed by faith, then they are imagined in the mind, or counterfeited by sight in the natural realm.** And to say that that is the serious problem is a great understatement.

There is a kind of life that is not in Christ. There is a place that is not in Christ. There is a creation that is not in Christ. And all of this was made so by the cross. The cross has separated from Christ all that is not of him, joined to him, and for him. This man, this place, this creation on the left of the diagram is accessed by sight.

On the other hand, there is a life that exists, but one that cannot be seen but by faith. There is a place that exists, but this place cannot be comprehended except by faith. There is a love that is real, but it will never be known apart from faith. All of these things are real in Christ..."where eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered the heart of man"...but which the Spirit has revealed.

I remember before I started to know what faith is. I remember that Christianity was, more or less, a collection of deeply held convictions and beliefs about God. Christianity was the things that I believed about what God did, what God was doing, could do, is like, and is going to do. Christianity was the things I believe to be true about all of these subjects. And I lived my life trying to believe the right things and apply the right believes to my circumstances and situations.

And when a trial or tribulation came along, when I found myself in a painful situation or stuck in a difficult circumstance, that's when I tried to "have faith". In other words, I lived on the left side of this diagram in my heart. That is where my reality was. That is where my identity was, my purpose, my focus, my goal, my relationships. But when something came along in the natural realm that made me scared, or angry, or insecure, then it was time for faith.

And what I understood that to mean, though I may not have described it this way, was that in those difficult times I would do my best to lay hold of believing something that I needed to be true over on the right side of the diagram. In hard times I did my best to believe in the things that I had read about. I did my best to rest my emotions and my beliefs on the right side of the diagram. I tried to cast all my cares over there. I tried to trust that my future was in the hands of something over on the right. I tried not to complain. I tried to just believe. It was like the power of positive thinking. That's the only kind of faith that I once knew.

When I began to know and experience a little of the faith that works in you by the light and mind of Christ, everything began to change. First of all faith was no longer my ideas and convictions about anything. Faith was the Lord's perspective that I begin to participate in. Faith was something bigger than my mind, more real than my beliefs.

But even beyond that, true faith was not just something that I applied to a situation. Faith wasn't supposed to be my response to a circumstance. Faith was a light and view that was shaping my heart, and transforming my soul, with or without difficult circumstances in the natural realm. Faith was defining circumstances in my heart before I ever experience them. In other words, faith was changing me, defining me, establishing my heart before I even arrived at a circumstance and situation. I did not need to call faith down from heaven when a difficulty arose. I simply had to walk in the faith that was already increasing in my heart.

You see, faith is not a tool that gets things for us and fixes problems. Faith is the way that you and I are supposed to live. You're supposed to live by faith and not believe by faith. We are supposed to walk by faith in that which the cross has established.

Let me turn this diagram the other way, so that the things that are accessed by faith are now above, and the things that are accessed by sight are now below. And then lets read this verse again in Colossians chapter 3.

**Col 3:1** *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

When Scripture uses the terms "above" and "below", you mustn't think about location. Don't think about up and down or near and far. It's the same with the words heaven and earth. The distance between heaven and earth is the difference between Adam and Christ. The distance between above and below is the otherness between the living and the dead. Its not about two different places. Its about two different kinds.

That which is below is that which is of the old, the first, the dead, the dark. That which is above is of the new, the second, the living, the light. So when Christ descended into the earth, or as He says in John chapter 6, when the Son of Man descended from heaven, He didn't have to move from one place to another place. He had only to be born of another kind. He descended into the earth not by flying down out of the clouds, but by coming out of the womb of an adamic woman. We all

know the story. He was born a man, submitted to the Law, so that He could put them both away. That is how Jesus "came down."

And therefore when we are risen with Christ, or when we are brought with Him into the ascension that we just read about, you mustn't picture yourself floating up into space. Your body did not have to leave the earth for your soul to ascend above. Your outward shell has nothing to do with whether or not your soul has risen and dwells above in the heavens. It has nothing to do with being two places at the same time. It has everything to do with your soul breaking out of one kind and realm and being translated into another. Your body is inconsequential to the entire thing. It stays put until it dies as a mere earthen vessel. Above and below has to do with the dwelling place of the soul, never the dwelling place of the body. Bodies don't go above.

And all I'm really trying to say tonight is this. Faith, which is the mind of the Lord, the light of His view, is how we walk in and abide in where the cross has brought us. Faith is how we live above. Faith is how we see what God has done, how we access what God has done, and how we live in the reality of what God has done. Faith is not something we try to muster for circumstances. Faith doesn't work that way. Faith doesn't come that way. Faith comes from a certain kind of learning, a certain kind of hearing, a hearing by living Word of God.