

# FAITH

**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Since we all want to please God, let's look into what faith is and how we can acquire this extremely important ingredient necessary to please him. Everything that we hear or see is filtered through our minds like a super fast computer. It has to filter through our knowledge and through all of our past experiences. For example: People who have been hurt in the past by someone in leadership have a hard time trusting leadership.

We, here in America, have a harder struggle with faith than people in third world nations. Most Americans know more about medicine and health care than the doctors did only a few decades ago. When we ask for healing, immediately, our mind goes to work on the negatives. Our mind processes the seriousness of the disease and others that have had the same disease and have had a bad outcome and this hinders our faith.. This is the reason that we hear about great healings and miracles in foreign lands, especially among the poor. These people have the child like faith that we must have in order to see great miracles. Yet in our own country, as well as those of other developed nations, we hear about very few miracles because we have been conditioned to seek a doctor first.

**Matthew 18:3** And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

When we come to God and ask for things, we need to come as a child. A child will go to their parents and ask for things, believing in their heart that the parent can do absolutely everything they ask of them. They have no doubts that nothing is impossible for the parent to do for them. That's called faith! Faith doesn't doubt, faith believes that everything is possible. When you have faith circumstances don't matter, you just believe in spite of those circumstances!

We as adults need to come to God in the same frame of mind. We need to believe that when we ask anything of God, that He is able to "...do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," (**Ephesians 3:20**). We as adults try to think our way out

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of troubles far too often when instead, we should be taking our needs to the Lord.

**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

I believe Paul is saying that faith is something that we want or need very badly, but, see no way possible to have it. It's like needing a large sum of money, but the bank has turned you down for a loan. You can't think of anyone to co-sign a note for you, and can't think of anyone who would loan you the money. The money is something you want or need or hope for, but there's no evidence present that you can see how you can obtain the money.

This is where faith comes in. The problem is that we look at the need through natural eyes, when we need to examine the need through faith. God has created the heavens and the earth. Why should it be impossible for God to help with whatever our need is? God made everything out of nothing, so He can make anything you need with no problem.

- He can heal your heart or give you a brand new one.
- He can cure your body of cancer or give you a new body if he desires.
- He can make money arrive when you need it.
- He can bring scriptures to mind when you need them for witnessing.
- The only thing God cannot do is fail!

Let's look at God doing the impossible:

**Job 26:7** He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

God not only created the heavens and earth, he hung the earth in the heavens and it hangs on absolutely nothing. God put it there and it stays there. When God does something He does it right. God has absolutely no problem doing anything, and He can do it with nothing. You don't even have to supply anything for Him. All you need is the faith for God to work! When you have faith, you open the door for God to do miracles. Let's look at another scripture concerning God's ability.

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**Psalms 33:6** By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

God made everything and all He had to do was speak the word. He didn't have to go to Home Depot and buy some nails and lumber. God didn't have to hire a welder or plumber. God just said it and it happened!

**Hebrews 11:3** Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

This scripture shows us that God does it all with nothing at all. We have absolutely no clue as to how he does what He does, we just need to have the faith in God that He will do it!

## *Participation Is Required In The Faith Process:*

While God needs nothing in order to do something, we have to remember that God can only work in our lives if we have the faith to let Him.

**Matthew 13:58** And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

The scripture we just read was talking about Jesus when he was in his home town. The people there had no faith in him because they didn't know who he really was. Therefore he wasn't able to help them like he would have liked. God will not force himself on us; we have to want him to work on us, and for us, before he will do anything. We have to be participants with God when we want, or need a miracle.

God is the source of all knowledge. He is the great physician, yet He allows doctors to help in the healing process of their patients. He made everything that all of the medicines in this world come from. When the doctors can't fix us, God is still able to heal us...but we have to believe!

God allowed Moses to participate when "The Wind of God" parted the Red Sea. God did the work, but Moses had to lift up his rod and wave his hand over the sea in order for it happen.

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God allowed the children of Israel to participate in the collapse of the walls of Jericho. God did the work, but the people had to do the walking before he would do it.

He allowed Gideon and a few good obedient men to participate in destroying several armies of the enemies of Israel that were camped in a valley waiting to attack Israel. All Gideon and his men had to do was to break some lamps and shout. God put confusion in the enemy's camp and they destroyed each other. God does the heavy lifting. He always has and always will. We just have to believe that he will do it!

**Acts 3:3-16** Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. **4** And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. **5** And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. **6** Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. **7** And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. **8** And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. **9** And all the people saw him walking and praising God: **10** And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. **11** And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering **12** And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? **13** The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. **14** But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; **15** And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. **16** And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

This man stood up immediately leaping and walking. God healed him, but it took Peter and John to speak the words, they offered of their faith by

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taking him by the hand and lifting him to get him started. The power of God did the work, but it took action and faith for the healing to take place.

He didn't have to go to a rehab to learn to walk! He'd been lame from his mother's womb, lame from birth. He'd never learned to walk; he never had the opportunity to learn to walk! Yet he leaped up, walked, and into the temple for the first time in his life, all the while praising God!! Nothing is too hard for God fix.

This man may have wanted to go into the temple all his life, but it was forbidden for anyone who was lame to enter into the temple. He was probably seeking God with all his heart. We don't know for sure, its pure speculation on my part that he was. But I really believe that with all his heart he wanted to go into the temple to be closer to God. God hears us when we really want to be near him. I believe it is for this reason why God sent Peter and John to heal this man. Because he believed that God could heal him, and because he wanted his healing so he could be closer to God!

## *Faith Without Works Is Dead*

**James 2:18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

**James 2:20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

**James 2:26** For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Not only do we have to participate in order for faith to work, we actually need to have faith to begin with. How do we know that we have faith? How do we know that God has been working in our lives? We know by examining our lives to see if there is evidence that God has made changes in our lives.

- Do we do the same things that we used to do before we came to the Lord?
- Do we go to the same places we used to go to before we were saved?
- Do we run around with the same people that we used to run around with before the Holy Ghost in-filled us?
- Do we have the same attitude towards people that we used to have before coming to Christ?

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- Can we document the changes that God has made in our lives since we repented of our sins and asked him to be the Lord of our life?

If we can provide evidence that we've changed, then it stands to reason that God is working in our life. If God is working in our life, then he can perform miracles in our lives. I say that because to turn a person's life around is a miracle in itself. You can have faith that God is working in your life and that he's able to meet any need that you have.

## ***TYPES OF FAITH:***

### ***Intercessory Faith***

**Matthew 8:5-10, 13** And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, **6** And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. **7** And Jesus saith unto him, **I will come and heal him.** **8** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. **9** For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. **10** When Jesus heard *it*, he marveled, and said to them that followed, **Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.** **13** And Jesus said unto the centurion, **Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.** And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

Many times people are healed through intercessory faith by someone who cares. It's not through faith of the individual that's healed, but the faith of a friend who cares. The servant had nothing to do with the healing process, the centurion asked God for him.

That's why we stress prayer in this church. It's not enough that we pray for ourselves, we need to pray for others as well. Who knows but what the prayer that we say this very day will be the prayer that's answered by God on behalf of someone who desperately needs God to move in their life!

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**Matthew 18:19** Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

These scriptures give us an idea of just how important it is to pray together for God to move. It's also another reason why we need to come together in fellowship. When we're together in one mind and one accord as they were on the day of Pentecost, God can move!

We need to pray not just for ourselves, but we need to spend time in prayer for others in the church and for our families. We need to bombard the gates of heaven with prayers that are specific, not shotgun prayers that spray everywhere. Prayers that are specific are far more effective than prayers that are unfocused, ill-defined, vague, or imprecise.

Just like a speaker who's constantly wandering off the point he's trying to make, he may make the point but who really knows what it is by the time he's finished making it. That's why we need to be specific in our prayers! Prayers that we make in this church during the service for those who are sick are rarely specific, that's why it's so important that we find someone to share our needs with, so that they can pray for our specific needs.

I've found through my experience that God answers my prayers for other people a lot more often than he does the ones I make for myself. It might be that my prayers for others are less selfish, it might be that I'm in total agreement for others and no one is in agreement with me for my needs. Whatever the reason, God moves when we pray for others.

## *An Appropriate Amount Of Faith?*

**Romans 12:3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Everyone has a measure of faith. If you believe in God, you have faith. If you ask God for anything, you have a measure of faith or you wouldn't have asked in the first place. The only question is how much faith do you actually have?

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There are people in this congregation tonight that have faith to be healed. How do I know? I've been healed by the Lord on more than one occasion. There are people in this congregation that have the faith necessary for others to be healed? How do I know? I've prayed for others to be healed and they have been healed. I've heard the testimony of others in this congregation concerning their praying for people to be healed, and they were healed.

But how much faith does it actually take in order for a person to be healed? Does it take a truck load of faith? Does it take a mountain of faith? Does it take a world of faith? Let's just see what the bible says about how much faith it takes in order to be healed, how much faith it takes in order for God to move in a situation.

**Luke 17:6** And the Lord said, *If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.*

As the scriptures show, it doesn't take but a mustard seed of faith in order for God to move mountains. We don't have to be world movers in order for God to move, we just have to believe!

**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

We have to remember that faith is necessary in order to please God. It's not an option, it's a requirement. We have to believe that God is God. It's hard to believe that people could ever "*NOT*" believe that God is real but so many do. We have to believe that God is real, and that as God there is nothing impossible for him to do. If anything is impossible for God, then he isn't God after all. But since nothing is impossible for him, he is God!

The second part of pleasing God with faith is to believe that he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. To diligently seek God is not to use God like you would 911. Sure he's there in our hour of urgent need, but to diligently seek him is not just to call on him in an emergency. It's to have a personal, intimate, eternal, relationship with God.

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How much have you worked on your relationship with God lately? How has your prayer life been lately? Are you reading your bible every day? When was the last time you did a bible study on your own? If the only bible study you are involved with is at church, you're starving yourself spiritually. You need to feed your soul every day. You need to keep the spirit inside you full of the word of God. There's the old story about an Indian with two dogs. A man asked him one day which was the strongest. The old Indian replied "The one I feed the most."

Are you feeding the Holy Ghost or are you feeding the Devil? What are the things that you listen to on the radio? Is it Gospel, or is it something the devil would feel at home with? What things do you read? Does what you read bring glory to God or would the devil have it in his library? Faith need to be fed, what are you feeding your faith?

How do we increase our faith? Just how do we feed our faith?

**Romans 10:14-17** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? **17** So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

To increase our faith we need to be faithful to be in church. We all have need of a preacher in our lives. We need to hear the word of God taught by a man of God who's operating under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. That's why we need to pray for the preacher as well, so that he'll be under the anointing when he preaches or teaches.

This is why our reading and studying the word of God is so important. It increases our faith every time we open the bible. Our faith grows as we study the word of God. When we fail to read the word of God, when we fail to seek the Lord in prayer, when we fail to attend church faithfully, that's when our faith becomes weak. That's when we're in trouble, because the devil doesn't attack strong people very much, he usually attacks the weak because they are not able to resist him very much. The scriptures teach us in **James 4:7** to "...resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

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## *Inherited Or Taught Faith?*

**2 Timothy 1:5** When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Was the faith, that Paul was talking to Timothy about, inherited from his mother Eunice or his grandmother Lois or was it taught by a loving and caring mother and grandmother during their everyday life as Timothy was growing up. I feel like the faith of Timothy was actually taught to him by his mother and grandmother. Just like with church; Sunday School Teachers, Pastors, parents, and grandparents teach faith by teaching children about the miracles in the bible.

**2 Timothy 3:15** And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus

If we want our children, if we want our friends, if we want our neighbors to be saved, we need to live the scriptures before them. We need to teach our children the scriptures they need in order to be saved. We need to teach them the scriptures they need in order to have faith. We need to live the bible in front of our neighbors and friends so they see that the bible is real in our lives. So they see that we're not hypocrites, so they see the difference between us and the world. Then, perhaps they'll allow us to show them the scriptures that will lead them to salvation, those which will help them to have the faith they need to be saved, and to receive miracles from the Lord our God.

**Proverbs 22:6** Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

We're commanded to train up our children in the way they should go. What way would that be but the way of the Lord! We need to teach our children to serve God from the time they're able to understand the English language. We need to "*live*" the word of God before them, even before they're able to understand the language. Experience teaches us that what

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children learn is more caught than taught. What are they learning by watching your life?

## *What Kind Of Faith Do We Need?*

### *1. Faith that God will supply our needs*

We will always have needs in our lives until the return of the Lord. That doesn't mean that we'll always be on the edge of a disaster; it means that we'll always have a physical, spiritual, financial and emotional need until that day in which the Lord meets all our needs for eternity.

You might say I'm perfectly happy, I'm saved, I'm financially secure and I'm happy. I don't have need of anything at all. I say that you only have it because the Lord is providing it to you. That spouse that you love, that job that supplies your financial needs, your heartbeat that works so regularly, God can take it all away from you in the twinkling of an eye! We only have to look at the book of Job to see that.

We need to study the scriptures until we know in our heart that God is going to meet our needs. We need to study them in order to know how we can obtain that kind of faith. We need to do those things in order to receive, through faith, those things which God desires to give us.

What things will be added to us if we seek the kingdom of God first?

**Matthew 6:25-33** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? **26** Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? **27** Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? **28** And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: **29** And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? **31** Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? **32** (For after all these things do

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the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. **33** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

God will add unto us all the things that we need to survive. He doesn't say that he will give us everything, but he does say that he will meet all our needs, the key word being "needs". Many times we ask things from God because we just want things, things that we really have no use for and will just take away our time that we need to use in serving God. This is known as asking amiss.

**James 4:3** Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

We need to be sure that what we ask of God is something that's truly needed, not just wanted. To ask God for fifty million dollars just so we don't ever have to work again is probably asking amiss. Asking for that kind of money to use for the work of the ministry, such as foreign missions, or to help grow churches is probably a better reason to ask.

Many people ask just because they "want". They want this, or they want that, when what they really need is a stronger relationship with God that only comes through prayer, fasting, and the study of God's word. We need to listen to Christian music or to preaching all the time instead of worldly music and talk radio.

Remember, your brain is like a computer, you put trash in it, you'll get trash out of it. Fill your brain and your heart with good things, Godly things. Remember what it says in:

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

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We want everything that we think, read, listen to or do to be glorifying to God. Remember that God reads your mail, he knows where you live, he has your email address and he knows your phone number. You can't hide anything from God. Faith has to be cultivated like a crop, if you want it to grow, you have to give it the right nutrients.

**Philippians 4:19** But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The most precious thing sought after on the earth is gold. In Heaven gold is used to pave the streets, it's pretty much worthless stuff up there. If God is rich enough to pave the streets of heaven with gold, would he be too poor to meet your needs? God will supply ALL your needs according to his riches in glory. There is not any need whatsoever that's too large for God to supply that which is needed. Remember he spoke all of creation into existence.

## *2. Individual faith*

While we need others to have faith with us, that still requires that we have faith within ourselves. If we don't have faith ourselves, how will that allow God to work in our lives? Remember that Jesus could do no mighty works in his home town due to their lack of faith. The following is an example of Jesus healing someone due to their own faith.

**Matthew 9:20-22** And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment: **21** For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. **22** But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, **Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.** And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Because she had faith, God was able to move in her life. You've got to believe that God is able to heal you before he will heal you. I have a hard time understanding how people that say they believe in God, can't believe that he can heal them. To be honest, I don't think the problem is them not believing that God can heal them, I think the problem is that they have a problem believing that God *will* heal them.

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Think about it, if God loved you so much that he came to earth, lived as a man, and died the cruelest of deaths, death by crucifixion on the cross. How can you not believe that he loves you enough to heal you of any infirmity you might have? God's already made a provision for you to be healed, you just have to accept it. Let's look at what God's word says that he's already done for us.

**Isaiah 53:5** But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

**1 Peter 2:24** Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

As we can see, the price truly has already been paid. Look in your mirror when you get home and tell yourself that God *can* heal you, and that he is *willing* to heal you. Then ask him *to* heal you! God's already done the work, we just have to accept that he did it for us as an individual! We're not who we think we are, we're kings kids. We're not Joe Blow or Betty Boop; we're children of the king! Remember the start of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father". God declares himself to be our father, so we are not lowly slaves, we're the sons and daughters of God almighty!

Back to Matthew chapter 9:

**Matthew 9:27-29** And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us. **28** And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, **Believe ye that I am able to do this?** They said unto him, Yea, Lord. **29** Then touched he their eyes, saying, **According to your faith be it unto you.**

As we can see, God was able to heal the blind. But how were they healed? They were healed according to their faith. Their faith was that he *was able* to heal them.

**Romans 10:17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

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When there's going to be prayer for the sick during a revival, the minister usually spends some time telling about miracles and teaching on faith. This is to increase your faith by the hearing of these miracles and to teach the word of God.

**Hebrews Chapter 11** is called the faith chapter. It tells of Noah, and many others who died in faith. If this chapter were being written today, I'd like my name to be included in this faith chapter along with the others who had faith.

### *3. How do we increase or exercise our faith*

**Deuteronomy 7:9** Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

God delights in doing things for his children. Since he owns everything, (the house and land that you think you own or are buying belonged to someone else a thousand years ago and will belong to someone else in the future), we are only a Steward of his land.

There are several steps that we can take to increase our faith. I believe these steps are as follows.

1. **Repent:** The devil uses guilt feelings for mistakes we have made in the past to hinder our faith. To get rid of these guilt feelings forever; repent and ask God for forgiveness.
2. **Attend church:** Faith cometh by hearing, therefore attending church on a consistent basis will allow a person to hear the word of God taught. It also allows for Christian fellowship. Testimonies of fellow Christians as to the power of God and his healing power will also increase our faith.
3. **Read the Word:** Faith cometh by the Word of God. Regular bible reading, especially the stories of healings will increase your faith. We must believe that He is, and that He rewards those who seek him. Set a goal to read several chapters in your bible every day.

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4. **Pray:** Regular prayer is indispensable in our efforts to increase our faith. As the old saying goes: One *week* without prayer makes one *weak*! If we're going to have faith in God, if we're going to hear his voice, we have to spend not just quality time, but significant quantities of time in prayer.

5. **Fast:** Fasting, which is abstaining from food in order to bring our bodies under subjection to the spirit, is a very important act of faith. We can't twist God's arm, but prayer and fasting are acts of obedience and obedience gets God's attention more than sacrifice.

Jesus was talking to his disciples about faith and the reason why they couldn't cast the demon out of a child. In **Mark 9:29** And he said unto them, **This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.**

**Although** the word "faith" isn't used very often in the Old Testament, the New Testament tells us of its importance in both the Old and New Testaments. "Faith" or "believing"; coupled with "obedience", unleashes the power of God to heal, to save, and to deliver those who have that faith.

God's power comes from out of nowhere and manifests itself in the form of miracles, signs, and wonders. It's this kind of faith that we find in the four Gospels and the Book of Acts. However, the scriptures reveal faith to be bigger and broader than what we might see if all we're doing is casually reading the word of God.

Faith, in its "first form" continues to evolve into its "final form" while never losing its initial power or effect on our lives. Neither form, at any time, cancels out the manifestation of the other. However, each form does have its own distinct characteristics which are not shared with the other. Some characteristics of this "first faith" are as follows:

## I. The Characteristics of "First Faith"

**1. First faith is active; and it has immediate, and usually observable, consequences.**

**Matthew 9:20-22** And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment:

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**21** For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. **22** But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, **Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.** And the woman was made whole from that hour.

The woman with the issue of blood had faith that if she touched the hem of Jesus garment, she would be healed of her infirmity. She was healed and this resulted in the Lord turning to her and proclaiming, **“Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole;...”** The results of her encounter with Jesus and the power he manifests when people come to him in faith; were instant and physically obvious to her.

The scriptures teach us that first faith is observable, and is revealed in this scripture:

**Matthew 9:2** And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and **Jesus seeing their faith** said unto the sick of the palsy; **Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.**

Jesus didn't just *know* they had faith, he was able to *see* their faith! How was he able to see their faith? By the effort they went through to get to him. If you will remember from the story, they had to tear a hole into the roof of the home where Jesus was ministering to the people. There were so many people around trying to get into see Jesus that they were unable to get into the door. So they climbed up on the roof of the home and tore a hole in it in order to lower their friend down inside so Jesus could heal him.

If you don't have faith, you don't carry someone who knows how far in order for him to be healed. If you don't have faith, you don't drag him up on a rooftop. If you don't have faith, you don't tear a hole in somebody's roof! You might get shot these days if you try that! Even back then it might have been an arrow or a spear! Ouch!

There has to be action involved with faith in order to manifest that action of that faith. Just as we read in part 1 of this series on faith, “Faith without

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works is dead, being alone”. How can you say that you have faith if you don’t make an effort to be at church on a regular basis? How can you say that you have faith if you don’t read the word of God on a regular basis? How can you say that you have faith if you never pray? There needs to be some action which shows that you have faith in God; before God takes action on your faith.

**2. First faith is personal:** Let’s read what the Lord says in:

**Luke 22:31-32** And the Lord said, **Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.**

Whose faith was the Lord talking about to Peter? “I have prayed for thee that *thy* faith fail not.” First faith, then, is not held by a group of people, but it’s held by an individual alone. It is their private possession; it doesn’t belong to, or depend on somebody else.

Remember the woman in **Matthew 9:22**? What did Jesus say to her? “*Thy* faith hath made thee whole...” You can’t rely on somebody else’s faith; you need to have faith within yourself. You can receive healing from God if you have faith within yourself. You can have answered prayers from God if you have faith within yourself. You can see God move in your life if you have faith in God.

I don’t want to diminish the need for others to believe along with us when we have a need. As we have previously stated in earlier lessons:

**Matthew 18:19-20** Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

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Group faith is important, especially when it comes to pulling down the strongholds of Satan. Remember that there are powers and principalities that we have to contend with:

**Daniel 10:12-13** Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. **13** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel had to fast and pray for his answer even though it was heard the first day. The devil has fallen angels in his army and they are powerful. But God has twice as many angels as the devil does. Even if God didn't have the devil outnumbered, he could destroy the devil with just a thought or a word. There's no competition whatsoever. But for whatever reason, God allows his angels to do things for him in many cases.

The angel that was sent to answer Daniel's prayer was helped by Michael the Archangel. When we come together in prayer, we're double teaming the devil and his angels. We're gang tackling the enemy. We stand together against anything that would come against us or our church!

Even with help from our friends we still need to do everything we can to help ourselves have faith. We need to start off by denying the devil opportunity to talk us into anything. We need to strengthen that which the Lord has given us. Let's read:

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: **4** (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) **5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

As one man I highly respect used to say; "The devil wouldn't be able to get your goat if you didn't tell him where it's tied". We don't need to blabber

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about our weaknesses'; we need to seek God for strength. When the devil is fighting us hard, we need to come together as a church and seek the Lord for deliverance from the attack of the enemy. Whether it's physical, financial, emotional, or spiritual, God is able to defeat the enemy if we will just have faith.

**3. First faith is Measurable:** There are three measures of faith in the New Testament: No faith, little faith, and great faith. Let's look at examples of each, and we'll start with No Faith:

## No Faith:

**Mark 4:37-40** And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. **38** And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? **39** And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, **Peace, be still.** And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. **40** And he said unto them, **Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?**

The disciples by this time had seen many miracles performed by Jesus, and yet when danger came their way they only thought of perishing. They had either forgotten about the miracles, or forgot that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. They weren't thinking straight anyway that you look at it.

If we're going to have faith, we have to believe the word of God. We have to believe that it's true. We have to trust God! There is no other way for things to happen. If we don't believe, it's not going to happen.

**James 1:2-8** My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; **3** Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. **4** But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. **5** If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. **6** 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. **7** For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. **8** A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

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While this passage talks about wisdom as it concerns unbelief, it's a principle that we must adhere to when it comes to asking anything from God. If we're "double-minded" The Lord isn't going to be answering our prayers. We are required to ask in "Faith". Remember what it says in **Hebrews 11:6** "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*:..."

## **Now let's look at little faith:**

**Luke 12:28** If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

There are those among us who believe that God can do all things, yet we don't believe that he will do them for us. These are they of little faith. They've seen the miracles that God has wrought. They've heard the stories of others getting healed. They may have even witnessed miracles happen to others, yet they don't believe that God can do those things for them. Worse yet, they don't believe that God will do miracles for them.

You don't have to be rich or famous for God to perform a miracle on your behalf, you only have to believe that he is able, and that he will. God didn't do many miracles for rich people or famous people. He did the vast majority of them for the poor people. Those of us who are poor financially or poor in spirit are those who are most likely to receive that miracle from the Lord, not less likely!

The bottom line is, we have got to have faith or we are not going to see God move in our lives like he would dearly love to do. Please folks, get the faith, develop that faith, and then keep that faith!

## **Finally, there is great faith:**

**Matthew 8:8-10** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. **9** For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me:

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and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. **10** When Jesus heard *it*, he marveled, and said to them that followed, **Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

This is the level of faith that works miracles. This is where we should all aspire to be. This is the kind of faith that the Lord is looking for in his people! I have to ask you church, are we doing the things which we have mentioned previously that strengthens our faith? Are we serious about serving God; or is going to church just something we do? If all we're doing is just going to church, we'll never be fulfilled. We'll never have the faith we need unless we're totally sold out for Jesus. We can't be half-steppers, we have to be totally committed to God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength!

Another thing to think about, this kind of faith doesn't have to be on site in order to get there miracle performed. This kind of faith moves mountains without even seeing the mountain. Remember, the Centurion wasn't with his servant when he asked for the healing. Jesus didn't have to go to the servant in order to heal him. This kind of faith transcends time and space! This is the kind of faith that I want! This is the kind of faith that I want the people in this church to have! What kind of faith do want tonight?

## **4. First faith is something you can obtain.**

**Mark 11:22** And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God.**

The disciples were advised to "Have faith in God". God wouldn't tell us to have faith if it were impossible for us to have faith. If we want to have faith, whether little or great, we need to seek God for it. It says in:

**James 4:2** Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, **because ye ask not.**

Just like anything else that we want, we need to ask God for it first. Jesus gave his life for you, do you really think that he wouldn't give you faith if you asked for it?

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Faith can be lost if we don't exercise it. Let's look in **Luke 8:25**:

**Luke 8:25** And he said unto them, **Where is your faith?** And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

If we don't use our faith, we'll lose it. So don't be upset when things aren't going your way all the time, sometimes God just wants us to increase our faith. Faith isn't just something we read about, faith is how we live and breathe.

**Romans 1:17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith.

When we have faith, and it shows, what we're truly showing is the righteousness of God. I hope and pray that this church will show the righteousness of God at all times. I want people to come in here and know that there is great faith in this church. I hope and pray that there is move of God in signs and wonders in this church so that all who attend know without a doubt that God is in this place!

Faith can also fail. Even someone as important as the Apostle Peter had issues with his faith, he just didn't know it at the time the Lord spoke the following verses.

**Luke 22:31-32** And the Lord said, **Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.**

The Lord will not easily let you lose your faith. He will continue to work on you long after you have given up on yourself. After the resurrection, the Lord told Peter to "Feed my sheep". Do you really think that he would have said that if he had given up on Peter for denying him? Not for a heartbeat do I think he would've done that. I think we can be absolutely sure that Jesus was not only fully behind Peter, but that he was deeply interested in restoring him!

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Faith can be increased, as we see when the disciples” requested an increase of faith from the Lord:

**Luke 17:5** And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

Basically the Lord told them in the verses that follow this one that they just had to believe in order for things to happen. It doesn't take a mountain of faith to move a mountain, it only takes a mustard seed of faith.

## 5. First faith is something experienced.

**Luke 7:50** And he said to the woman, **Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.**

This was a woman that had done many things that a Christian wouldn't be proud of. She wasn't a Christian yet, but after showing her repentance and desire to be saved, the Lord fulfilled her wish, she experienced salvation! Others have experienced healing.

**Mark 10:52** And Jesus said unto him, **Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.** And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

The blind man in this scripture was blind no more! He experienced the healing power of God. The woman with the issue of blood was also healed. Faith doesn't have to be a stranger, and it isn't. You can experience faith for yourself!!

## 6. First faith is often characterized by pressing need.

**Mark 9:20-29** And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tore him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. **21** And he asked his father, **How long is it ago since this came unto him?** And he said, Of a child. **22** And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. **23** Jesus said unto him, **If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.** **24** And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. **25** When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, **Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge**

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thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. **26** And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. **27** But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. **28** And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? **29** And he said unto them, **This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.**

Nothing here was planned in advance. This father acted upon the need of his child, with the full sincerity that only a parent can express. The need was going to be met now or never, so he wasn't shy about asking the Lord to heal his child. Nor was he disappointed, his child was delivered from the demon!

Another thing to consider here is that the disciples weren't ready to do what was needed. If we're going to do the work of God we have to be prepared for it. What did Jesus say about how this kind goes out? Not but by prayer and fasting. We need to be prepared if we want God to move!

**7. First faith is usually instant, and restores.** This was manifested many times in the miracles of Jesus both in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts. We've just looked at many of these scriptures. The result was consistently characterized by a healing and most often by a restoration of "wholeness" regardless of what the initial problem was. "Thy faith hath made thee whole" is the normal result of first faith when manifested.

One case where "wholeness" was not instantaneous was in the case of the ten lepers. Let's read that account:

**Luke 17:12-19** And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: **13** And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. **14** And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, **Go show yourselves unto the priests.** And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. **15** And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, **16** And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. **17** And Jesus answering said, **Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? **18****

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There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. **19** And he said unto him, **Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.**

In this case, the lepers were only healed; they were not instantaneously made whole. But when one came back to worship the Lord for his healing, He was made whole. There's a lesson here, we should always show our thankfulness for his mercy and grace to the Lord when he works a miracle in our life. Even if we only get healed and not made whole, we need to thank the Lord and worship him. Who knows but whether the Lord will take healing to the level of wholeness.

**8. First faith is felt, is connected to the will, and often transcends understanding.** Just as there are the five senses of the body, there are senses of the spirit. It is through these spiritual senses, one of which is faith, that the power of God is felt and miracles are manifested. Paul gave an example of the difference between “body” senses and “spiritual” senses when he said in:

**1Corinthians 2:9-10** But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. **10** But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

In the four Gospels and the book of Acts, faith is clearly observed, amazing to the beholder, and flows like the wind wherever it wishes to go. It's a mystery, intuitive rather than learned, and it refuses to be put in a box. It can appear unpredictable to the person inexperienced in spiritual things, going from extreme highs to extreme lows in a short period of time. One moment Peter was walking on the water, and the next, he was sinking.

This kind of faith magnifies the present; it intensifies the “now” and eliminates the limited constraints of time, space, and matter. It's incredibly awesome, exciting, and it changes those who experience it into a new realm of reality, one where nothing is impossible for God, and therefore all things are possible to those who believe. This is the first form in which we find faith in the New Testament.

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## II. The Final Form of Faith

Faith, while retaining its power to heal, to save, and to make whole, will nevertheless evolve. It cannot, and it will not remain the same. This is why you see the term “The Faith” more and more often as we continue through the New Testament. The books of the New Testament that were written the earliest do not often mention “The Faith”. That said, books written later have many references to “The Faith”. For example, “The Faith” is never mentioned in the four Gospels or in I and II Thessalonians. It’s mentioned only twice in I and II Corinthians. The Christian academic community is in general agreement that these books were the earliest written. Vice-versa, those which were written later use the term “The Faith” fairly often. In I and II Timothy and Titus alone, the phrase is used at least fifteen times.

Faith at this point has grown from just the power to heal and to save, in other words the miraculous power of God being manifested in human life, to a fully transforming, life encompassing, ongoing experience that dictates how and why we do almost everything in our lives.

But what is “The Faith”? The faith includes initial or first faith, but it can also be defined as the fullness of scriptural knowledge of the word of God by which we live and breathe. “*The Faith*” is no longer God working to take care of immediate needs for healing, clothing, food... the essentials of life. God still does that, but final faith is delivering ourselves’ completely to God. He rules all that we think, act, and do. God, and his word, defines who and what we are to the very fullest extent. We’re nothing without him and everything with him. All things are possible through him, is the *only* way we believe.

When we have “The Faith” we’re no longer struggling to believe in God or in his power. We’re living examples of that faith because we live our lives *in faith* knowing that we have our salvation in God, that we have our needs taken care of by him. We acknowledge that God is in control of our lives and we wouldn’t want it any other way!

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## III. Characteristics of “The Faith”

### 1. Faith is once delivered

**Jude Vs 3** Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was **once delivered** unto the saints.

We need to keep in mind that “The Faith” was delivered *once*. That’s because there is only one faith. There are no more holy books to be written. No additional chapters to be added to the bible we already have. What has been written is written. It has been established by God and will never change. No one is to add to or take away from the bible that God has delivered unto his children.

**Revelation 22:18-19** For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: **19** And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

Do you really want to have your name taken out of the book of life? Do you really want all those plagues added to you? I know that I don’t want that to happen to me! God is unchanging and so his word is also unchanging. Don’t try to change the word to meet your doctrinal position, change your doctrinal position to match the word of God!

What is wrong is, and always will be wrong no matter what some political pundit says. What is righteous will always be righteous no matter what some critic writes. We’re not to compromise the word of God regardless of what some religious leader proclaims from across their pulpit. There is no compromising the word of God to those who live by faith!

### 2. We must "earnestly contend for the faith"

**Jude Vs 3** Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you*

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that **ye should earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints.

“*The Faith*” is the absolute core of the very existence of Christianity. We’re to guard the word of God carefully. We’re to pay particular attention to the doctrines expressed in the bible.

**1 Timothy 4:16** Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

As the scriptures teach us, we’re only saved through the proper application of the doctrine expressed in the bible. Through them we know that we need to believe in Jesus Christ, be baptized in his name, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Through them we learn how to live for Christ and how to die to ourselves.

Through doctrine, we know that any so called revelation that may come along after we’ve received the true word of God is false. The book of Mormon, the Koran, the Gnostic “*so called*” gospels of Thomas and Mary are patently false, and do not in any way come from God.

### **3. We’re to “stand fast in the faith”**

**1 Corinthians 16:13** Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

Faith in its first form is characterized by action, whereas faith in its final form is characterized by immovability. We cannot be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine as we see in:

**Ephesians 4:14** That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

We cannot be moved by those who prey upon the weak minded. We cannot be moved by those in authority who would command us to cease our service to the Lord our God. The Apostle Paul puts it this way:

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**2 Timothy 1:12** For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

We *live* the word of God and *believe* the word of God and we will not change for any man, or anything! Final faith is unchangeable faith! We stand on the word of God if the whole world should crumble around us. We stand on the solid rock, that sure foundation which is Christ Jesus our Lord!

**1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

We know that the Lord is on our side and that our reward is not of this world. We know that our reward is heavenly and not earthly. We know that if God be for us and the world be against us, the world will fall and those of us on God's side will be the ones who remain standing. We're steadfast and unmovable in the final form of faith.

## **4. We're established in the faith.**

**Colossians 2:6-7** As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: **7** Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

In final faith, we are rooted and grounded in the word of God. That's why it's so important that we read God's word and that we pray for guidance. We're to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." as it says in **2 Timothy 2:15**

Our roots are in solid ground where we cannot be blown over by the winds of the devil. We're established in the King's country where he's in total control of all that happens. Nothing in this world can destroy our faith. Our face is "set like a flint" as **Isaiah** said in chapter **50:7**.

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## 5. We're to “continue in the faith”

**Romans 11:22** Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

We have a contrast between first faith and final faith here. With first faith we're just learning how to have faith in God. In final faith, we have learned, albeit we will always continue to learn, yet nevertheless the key word here is “continue”. We don't walk by sight, but we walk by faith. “The just shall walk by faith” as it says in **Romans 1:17**.

Final faith does not give up, it will not quit, it will prevail, because we have set our minds and our future in the hands of the immovable, immutable, incontrovertible, indisputable, undeniable, irrefutable, incontestable, God almighty.

## IV. Conclusion

We can only conclude that the full range of biblically defined faith begins with an active, miraculous display of God's power. This manifestation is always immediate, in the “here and now”. Faith in this form is powerful and subject to the whims of God, and is affected by the human will as well.

Final faith, in contrast, while it doesn't leave behind its supernatural character, becomes “*The Faith*,” a form of faith that is unchangeable in the “here and now” and it's forever established in the heart of a true believer. It's alive and contains miraculous transforming power, but it does so gradually through continual growth, and moves from “glory to glory”.

We must remember that “*The faith*” was completed with the conclusion of the New Testament. It was “*once*” delivered. It is not open to additions or subtractions. Revelation 21 informs us that heaven has twelve foundations and in them the names of the twelve apostles. “*The Faith*” that the twelve apostles provided is the foundation of truth not only on earth now but in the universe

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now and forever. We are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” **Ephesians 2:20**. Such a gift is far too majestic to treat with anything less than utmost care, dignity, and reverence.

*Parts of the outline used here came from a source I can no longer identify. What is written beneath those headings in the parts which I have used is considerably different, not to mention usually considerably longer than what was written by the person who wrote the original outline, and with far more scriptures for reference material. It is also intentionally written at a lower grade level so that more people might understand it.*

*Rev. Bill Johnson*