

WHEN PRIDE DISGUISES AS FAITH Part 3

Ephesians 2:8–9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Notice, faith is a GIFT of God. This is intended to prevent boasting (or pride)!

I think most people believe faith is simply about saying the right things. However, saying the right things isn't faith. Saying the right things is simply a "mechanism" of faith (the way faith operates)!

Romans 10:9

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Faith is *believing with the heart*. *Confessing with the mouth* is simply how we exercise or express our faith.

Now, the thing we must understand about faith is that it takes GRACE FROM GOD to believe with heart!

Acts 18:27

²⁷ And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

Sometimes we wonder why we're struggling to believe. It could be we're trying to believe for something that we haven't received the grace for!

This begs the question, "Why haven't we received the grace? Is there a reason why God might not give grace to a person to believe?" Yes. In fact, there could be MANY reasons why God might not give a person grace to believe.

MAYBE WE HAVEN'T ASKED GOD

Mark 9:23–24

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.

Sometimes we HAVE NOT simply because we ASK NOT. If you're struggling to believe a promise, ask God for the grace.

MAYBE WE HAVEN'T *HUMBL*ED OURSELVES

James 4:6

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Notice, grace is given to the HUMBLE. Therefore, if we want to receive faith, then we must humble ourselves first! Faith and humility go hand in hand.

Matthew 15:22, 26–28

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Notice how this woman's faith is described as "great". Why? Partly because she was humble!

HOW DO WE HUMBLE OURSELVES?

We humble ourselves through *repentance*.

James 4:8–10

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

If we're struggling to believe, it's possible we're lacking the grace to believe. If we're lacking the grace to believe, then we possibly need to HUMBLE ourselves and REPENT.

The door of faith is opened through repentance. (Jesus said, "Repent and believe"!)

Furthermore, it's possible that the trial we're in is being used to humble us!

Deuteronomy 8:2

2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Instead of being humbled in our trials, it seems we're intent on doing the exact opposite (i.e. justifying ourselves, blaming others, refusing to repent). We don't realize that before God deals with our problem, He wants to deal with our pride (or sin)!

James 5:16

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Notice, our prayers will not be "effectual" (effective) unless we humble ourselves and repent.

"What if we never repent? What happens then?" If we never repent, then we probably won't be delivered. (If somehow we are delivered, that deliverance will only be temporary. Whatever we were trying to avoid will return and it will remain for the rest of our life (or until we repent).

Don't let pride keep you from faith. Faith is not about determination or will power. Faith is a gift from God that is only given to the humble. So, learn to repent. Confess your faults BEFORE you try to confess God's promises. Ask God to open your heart and give you the faith you need to inherit His promises.

Don't let pride or sin keep you entering in and having God's best for your life. Understand that your trials are probably trying to humble you and bring some sin to your attention. Deal with the sin before that sin deals with you!

1 Corinthians 11:30–32

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.