

08/27/23 Message

Part of Blurred Faith

August 26, 2023

Message: Perspective

Series: Blurred Faith

This is a series discussing the real impact life has on our faith. It is often too easy to abandon or detour from God's will when our faith is blurred. Sometimes, just sometimes we don't realize our faith is blurred because we don't know what it's like to live without the blur!

Paul Brings Clarity to Blurred Faith

Acts 20:36 (NLT)

When he had finished speaking, he knelt and prayed with them.

Paul was about to face a journey to persecution and imprisonment. He wasn't focused on himself. In a time when the Ephesian elders should be praying over Paul, he was the one praying over them!

Peter Weighs In

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT)

8 Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

9 Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith...

Peter used words that could be translated "stay alert" but more aptly, "be sober" meaning to exercise self-control, keep calm, don't let anything take over your mind or your spirit.

When you are studying the Bible, go through Paul's letters and read his prayers... This dude could pray! If I need a touch from heaven, I want someone like Paul in my life covering me with a blanket of prayer! When I'm on my knees before God, I want someone like Paul standing over me, or kneeling beside me, praying for

Paul's Prayers Over the Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 3:7-13 (NLT)

7 So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith.

8 It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.

9 How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence.

10 Night and day we pray earnestly for you, asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.

11 May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon.

12 And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows.

13 May he, as a result, make your hearts strong, blameless, and holy as you stand before God our Father when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen.

Paul is telling us about being sober minded, sober spirited, and what it takes to keep the right perspective in the midst of life's 3 T's:

- Temptations
- Trials
- Tribulation

Paul's Key to Perspective

- Remain STRONG in your faith (v7)
 - cf. Matthew 16:18 (you need your church for maximum strength)
- Remain THANKFUL in your faith (v9)
 - A thankful spirit brings great joy
- Remain PRAYERFUL in your faith (v10)
 - Keep the devil away, pray night and day
- Remain LOVING in your faith (v12)
 - Our love for God and one another should grow and overflow

A Changed Perspective

Paul gives a visual image of three things that will radically change our perspective (v13)

- Strong heart
 - Strong spiritual connection to the source of strength
 - Exercise this spiritual muscle
- Blameless
 - Free from all charges
 - Realize your past is your past, you are not guilty, and you have been set free
- Holy (set apart for...)
 - Divine (of God)
 - Redemptive (saving or freeing from bondage)
 - Purposes (the reason for it)

To be holy means to be set apart, to be freed from bondage, to be saved from sin, for God's purposes. It's all about perspective! What would change in your life, if you lived your life for God's purposes and not your own? Blurred faith can be cleared in an instant when we get things in the right perspective! Galatians 2:20, not I but Christ... it's all for Him! My life is His! I belong to Him! I live for Him! I serve Him! He is in me, and I am His!

—Pastor Chad