

Prevailing Faith - Pt 2

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I. Recap

A. Faith is when we believe that what God promised is true and is therefore real.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen

—Hebrews 11:1

B. Christians are to walk by faith and not by sight... “we don’t go by what we see, we go by what we know.” Faith isn’t a feeling. When God says something about us, we believe it is true and therefore it is real, regardless of our circumstances. Circumstances are subject to change. His word never changes. He never changes!

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

—Romans 10:17

C. Faith comes by filling our hearts and minds with the word of God. Not just what someone else says about the word, but with the word itself. Good teaching is important, but digging into the word, reading it and listening to it for yourself is critical.

D. Faith receives what God has promised. It doesn’t “create” something new, it accesses and apprehends what God has already provided by His grace. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8). He has granted us everything that pertains to life and godliness (2 Pe 1:3). We access and receive these precious promises by faith.

E. Today are going to investigate the three expressions of faith that are in the New Testament: Foundational Faith, Persevering Faith, and Prevailing Faith. We know there is one faith (Eph 4:5) but it expresses itself in different ways.

F. One of the key questions we will answer today is why do bad things happen?

G. Before we get into that, we need to set a context for how the kingdom of God is manifest now and how it will be manifest in the future. This understanding is essential to help us process where we are on our faith journey, specifically where we are on the timeline of human history.

II. Kingdom Reality - Inaugurated but not Consummated

A. When Jesus began his earthly ministry, He came preaching, “Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Mat 4:17, Mark 1:15).

- This was a huge statement. He was in effect saying that the reign of heaven had begun on earth through His ministry. The kingdoms of this world were now beginning to come under the authority of the kingdom of heaven.
- God’s rule and God’s reign was starting through Jesus. The enemy’s authority was being displaced, and the authority of heaven’s reign was being installed. The fullness of it would come at a time in the future, but the beginnings were now.

B. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus publicly defeated and disarmed
Satan (Col 2:15)

- The cross marked the beginning of Jesus’ reign. Though Satan was defeated at the cross, he still has an occupying force that causes havoc. His forces are like a terror group who has been overthrown but continue to try to create terror, though their days are numbered. In other words, He is disempowered but still dangerous.
- The fullness of the reign of Christ is still to come after He returns. His throne will be established in Jerusalem. The law will go forth from there where He will teach the nations His ways. His glory will cover the earth as waters cover the sea. It will be an age of heaven on earth.
- This was all initiated in His first coming but will only be finalized

in His second coming.

C. This means that today we're living in the overlap of the ages.

- Death reigned from Adam to Christ. The way of things changed at the cross. Through the cross, grace is available to all men because of Jesus' death and resurrection. All those who believe in Jesus will reign in this life by grace (Rom 5:17). We reign, in the sense that we are participating with Jesus in this first stage of His reign. We are empowered and authorized by Jesus to reign with Him amidst His enemies. We are beginning to participate in His reign right now while we are still on the battlefield. This is why the bible tells us to: 1 Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life...
- Jesus has empowered His church with His authority (Mat 28:18-20). Our calling now is to live the values of the kingdom (Mat 5-7), manifest the powers of the age to come (Heb 6:5) as a sign of His return, and make disciples of all nations through preaching the good news. Namely, that people can leave the kingdom of darkness and enter the reign of the Lord Jesus: God's chosen king!
- The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever.
- We live in this age by faith, believing in the fullness of His coming, knowing that it is true and that it is real. This is biblical Christianity. **This is biblical faith.**

III. Foundational Faith

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

—Ephesians 2:8-9

A. Foundational Faith is saving faith. It is the faith that believes that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid for your sin. It recognizes that we are all sinners and that we are eternally separated from God because of our sin.

B. Foundational Faith accepts Jesus' sacrifice and receives salvation

from sin through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

C. There are two points of emphasis in foundational faith: justification and sanctification. These two together amount to us being declared righteous by faith.

- Justification says though you were guilty in sin, Jesus took your penalty of guilt and now you are declared innocent before God.
- Sanctification says though you were defiled in sin, Jesus has cleansed you and now you stand before Him holy and are empowered to grow in conformity to His will, overcoming sin in this life.
- Those who are cleansed are declared innocent and therefore you are righteous, all by faith in the work of the Cross.
- Foundational faith points us to a future day when we will be glorified with Christ – resurrected, freed from death, fully transformed, living in a glorified state with Him forever.

IV. Persevering Faith

For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

—Hebrews 10:36

A. Persevering faith remains steadfast through suffering and trials. It trusts God when promises are delayed and circumstances seem to contradict what God has spoken.

B. Consider Abraham who first received the promise that he would be a great nation at age 75. He stayed in faith until he was 100 when Isaac was born and he received the promise.

He did not waiver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God...

—Romans 4:20

C. Persevering faith does not revise what God has promised based on our

experience. It doesn't abandon hope when answers are delayed. It doesn't create doctrine because we appear to be barren. It holds fast that what God has promised is true and the assurance that His promises are real, even when fulfillment is unseen. Persevering faith stays the course.

D. Persevering faith is prominently displayed throughout Hebrews 11. The

Fathers and Mothers of faith lived by faith, trusted God fully, and interestingly, though they did many mighty works (raising the dead, subduing kingdoms) it was said of them:

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

—Hebrews 11:13-16

E. They saw the promises from afar, embraced them, and ordered their lives around them. They saw mighty things happen in this life but they, “never received the promises”.

F. The key to persevering faith is recognizing that we have a city that God has prepared for us. That this earth is not our home. That we are strangers and pilgrims here. That as Abraham was, we too are, “Looking for the city whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb 11:10)

V. Prevailing Faith

So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God.' 23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things

*he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24
Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you
pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have
them.*

—Mark 11:22-24

- A. Prevailing faith confidently believes God now for the outworking of His promises. It is the faith Jesus consistently called for in the Gospels—the faith that asks, seeks, knocks, and receives what God has promised.
- B. Prevailing faith apprehends what grace has already provided and engages God with bold trust, believing that His kingdom is active and operative now.
- C. Prevailing faith is demonstrated throughout Jesus' ministry.
 - The sick were healed because they believed Jesus' word was true and His power was real.
 - Demons were cast out because the authority of the kingdom was present and engaged by faith.
 - Jesus repeatedly said, "Your faith has made you well," affirming that faith actively participates in God's present work.
 - Prevailing faith prays with confidence and persistence. It does not shrink back in uncertainty, nor does it become offended when answers are delayed. It continues to contend, trusting God's justice, goodness, and wisdom.
 - Prevailing faith always submits to God's will and timing without surrendering expectation. It believes for healing, deliverance, provision, and breakthrough now, while remaining fully anchored in persevering faith should fulfillment take longer than expected.

VI. Faith is the Victory

*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And
this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.*

—1 John 5:4

- A. The key in all expressions and experiences of faith is recognizing that faith is the victory, through prevailing or persevering, faith is what

causes us to overcome.