

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 3 – Six Foundational Doctrines of Christ

Lesson 7 - Faith

Hebrews 6:1-2 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

Now I know there is a lot of teaching out there on faith, a lot of discussion on faith, and then there is a lot of confusion about faith. I want us to lay a really simple, but powerful, doctrinal foundation on faith. The deep things in Christ are actually simple to understand. They are not confusing.

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

He is not just saying that the grace is not of yourself. He is saying that the faith is not of yourselves. Faith is not naturally inherent inside of man.

Faith is not a natural life force.

How do people confuse hope for faith?

You're hoping the chair won't break when you sit in it. It's hope when you turn the light switch on. That is not faith. That is hope, because I have turned light switches on and nothing came on. But faith never fails because faith is not a natural life force.

Faith is not inherent in fallen man. If it is not something we have inherent inside of us, then we need to discover what it is, how to get it, and how to function in it. We need a revelation of faith because the Bible clearly says without faith it is impossible to please God.

We often misunderstand what Paul was saying in Romans 12. We are notorious for taking things out of context. We are notorious for applying scriptures to things that they should not be applied to. Context demands that we understand that Paul is speaking to Christians. He is not speaking to the world; he is not speaking to the heathens.

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Romans 12:1-3 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

God gave to each one of the *brethren* a measure of faith. Faith is not a natural life force. Faith is not something you can work up in and of yourself. Faith is the gift of God.

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

It says faith has substance. That means faith is tangible. It's actually real. It's just not some mystical, ethereal thing out there. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Faith is actually the evidence, the proof that you have the thing that you are hoping for.

What does the word 'evidence' literally mean?

That word 'evidence' literally speaks of a title deed. When you own property or a house you get a title deed which is a legal document that declares that you own that particular property.

The Bible says the fruit of the spirit is what? It's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness...(Galatians 5:22) The word 'faithfulness' is the Greek word *pisteo* which has the same root as the Greek word for faith, *pistus*. Faith is one of the fruits of the spirit. Not just faithfulness, but faith is the fruit of the spirit.

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

So then faith comes by hearing. Faith comes which means it wasn't in you. It has to come to you. And it comes how? It comes by hearing. But by hearing what? By hearing the *rhema* of God. That word 'word' there is the Greek word *rhema*.

What does the Greek word 'rhema' mean?

Rhema literally is a Word spoken by God.

There are three main Greek words in the New Testament that we translate the English word "word." One is *logos*. The *logos* literally speaks of the thoughts of God, the very substance of God. The Bible says, "In the beginning was the Word"...the *logos*... "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

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Another Greek word translated as word is *graffe*. It's where we get the English word graffiti from. And it literally means the written Word of God. A lot of people misunderstood and said *rhema* is the written Word.

When God speaks there is faith resident inside the Word itself. God put the faith to bring His promises to pass inside of the Word itself. He's not waiting on your faith. He is not waiting on you. God did not subject His promises to your daily whims. He didn't subject His promises to whether you woke up and felt good this morning. He made His promises sure because He not only gave a Word, but He put the faith to bring that Word to pass inside the Word itself. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by a *rhema* of God.

There are two things about that word 'hearing' that you need to understand. First, the original meaning of it doesn't just mean to simply hear, but it means to hear and understand. Second, the implication of that hearing doesn't mean to just hear and understand. It also implies to obey. Because when Jesus said, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 11:15) What was He saying? "Don't just listen." "Because," He said, "anybody who hears My words but doesn't do them, he is a fool." (paraphrasing)

*Faith comes by hearing and understanding a Word spoken by God,
and then obeying that Word.*

What is the Law of First Mention?

The Law of First Mention states that the first time a truth or principal is taught in Scripture lays a precedent for how to interpret that law or principal throughout the rest of Scripture.

For example, we know that Lucifer said he was going to make himself like the most high God. But that phrase "most high God" first appeared when Abraham had given the tithe to Melchizedek. Melchizedek was blessing Abraham who served the most high God. Then it said "the possessor of heaven and earth". So whenever you see the phrase "most high God," it is speaking about God as "the possessor of heaven and earth".

So what was Lucifer saying? He was saying, "I am going to make myself the possessor of heaven and earth." The Law of First Mention gives greater understanding, greater revelation to what Lucifer was really saying.

Where was the first place in the Bible, according to the principle of the Law of First Mention, that faith was ever attributed to anyone? Now most everybody would raise their hand and say, "It was Abraham, the Father of Faith." But you know what, that is not true. In the Old Testament the Bible says Abraham believed and it was accredited to him as righteousness. It didn't say it was faith. The first time that faith was actually attributed to anybody in the Bible was in the New Testament.

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Matthew 8:5-7 *Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”*

This man is a Roman. A non-Jew who has Jewish servants, and this Roman Centurion had to humble himself just to come. The Romans viewed the Jews, in fact they viewed all other people, as inferior. They viewed the Jews as almost subhuman. He had to humble himself and come to a Jesus, a Jew, and ask him to come heal his servant. Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

Matthew 8:8-10 *The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!*

The first person in the Bible that God ever attributed faith to was not even a Jew. It was a Roman Centurion. And it is the only place in the Bible where Jesus ever marveled over anybody’s great faith. What was it about this man? What was it about what he did that caused Jesus to give him the honor of being the first one to attributed faith to, and also the honor of being the only one that He marveled at his great faith? What caused Jesus to take this Roman Centurion, a heathen, and mark him down for all of history, and to establish him under the Law of First Mention as the precipice point to give understanding about faith? What did this man do?

Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.” Immediately the Centurion said, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof.” He understood something. He understood authority. If I go and visit your home, although I preach all over the world, when I walk into your home I come under, to a dimension, your authority.

Haven’t you ever heard a father say, “Young lady, as long as you are under my roof, you will obey my rules.” What is he saying? He is saying as long as you are under my authority, you will do what I tell you to do.

All authority is imparted. All authority is given. The centurion was given authority by the Roman government and he understood that Jesus had been given authority from God.

He understood that Jesus walked in such authority that He could simply speak the Word and his servant would be healed. And Jesus marveled at his faith.

Jesus’ message from the beginning was to repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The authority of God, the authority of heaven has come. The authority of heaven is everything. Everything in the kingdom of heaven is about authority.

Faith is an authority issue.

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Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. But it is predicated on us yielding to the authority of that Word. The Bible says in Isaiah 53:5 *but he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised by our inequities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.* The faith for healing is resident within that Word. People don't always receive their healing because they are trying to do it in themselves and to work up some emotion.

Faith was truly manifested by Mary when the angel approached and said, "You are going to have a baby," and she said, "How could this be?" And when he said, "The Holy Spirit is going to overshadow you." She said, "Be it unto me as thou has spoken it. I'm just going to yield to the Word. I'm not going to try and figure it out." (paraphrasing) That is faith!

*Faith is yielding and submitting to the Word of God,
and that is why without faith it is impossible to please God.*

What does the word 'faith' mean?

The word 'faith' is the Greek word *pistes*. It actually means fidelity which is loyalty to authority. The word actually means to be loyal, submitted, committed to authority.

God said without faith, without your loyalty, submissive, yielding of authority to Him it is impossible for you to please Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

God gives us His Word and the power of faith is in it. What is that power? It is the power to obey God. He put that in His Word so that when we really receive the Word, we understand the Word. We say yes to the Lord and to His Word and the faith that is resident in the Word is released to bring the promise to pass. Faith is so simple. Faith is simply yielding your will to the Word of God. You can't work it up. Faith didn't come from you. It comes from God. He sent His Word, and in that Word is the power to obey. It empowers you to obey. All you have to do is say, "Yes Lord," and then the power will be released as you simply yield to God.

Jesus functioned and lived on this earth that way. Thirty-eight times in the book of John, Jesus said a phrase, one way or another that is epitomized in John 6:38. He said, "*I have come not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*" Pastor Paul Yung E Chow of the biggest church in the world says it this way: "I pray, and I obey."

That is faith. You hear from God, and you do what He says. It's that simple. You don't have to work up emotions. You might not even feel like you have the emotion of faith. You might not even feel very believing, but you say, "Irregardless of my feelings God, I look to You. I trust You. I choose to submit to Your Word no matter what my circumstances say." And God says, "That is faith!"

For Further Study:

Key Topic: Faith

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Matthew 9:29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.”

Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.