

FAITH THAT WORKS

MOTIVATION: Illiterate PC owners often have unrealistic expectations of how it works. This PC's not working right or they confuse the parts (Wifi not wireless mouse) The same is true of faith. We want a faith that works but we don't understand how to make it work.

Disciples couldn't heal the lunatic:

O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?

Because of your unbelief: *for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* (Mat 17:20).

Howbeit, Jesus said, this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. (Mat 17:21).

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (Jas 2:20)

INTRODUCTION: You need to understand three essential things about faith.

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

Job 13:16 He also *shall be* my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

I. TRUST, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him* We use faith and trust interchangeably.

a. Faith: Is something we have – a noun: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* (Heb 11:1).

b. Trust: Is something we do – a verb. Trust is faith in action - *Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* (Jas 2:18).

c. Illustration: Jean Francois Gravelot “The Great Blondin” Daredevil who walked across Niagara Falls on a tightrope several times. Each time he increased the difficulty and asked the audience if they believed he could do it: Alone, Manager on his back, Wheel barrow, Volunteers).

d. Job: Suffered so bad he thought it would end in death (a dead leaf falling to the ground). *Thou he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* He was willing to trust God to the end even if he wasn't healed. Like Abraham, *Who against hope believed in hope...* (Rom 4:18) Job was willing to trust God to the end.

If faith is the substance of things hoped for, what do you have left when there's no hope? God

Most people give up at this point (double minded). But there is another thing needed to buttress that trust in God. I call it the tenacity of faith.

II. TENACITY: *I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation* Not that Job wanted it his way. He had chosen God's way and nothing was going to change his mind. Tenacity is that persistent, stubbornness, dog headed resolve that drives great leaders. Like Paul we got to *press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus* (Php 3:14).

a. Our faith will be tested:

b. This is what separates the righteous from the unrighteous. There is a contrast between those that have tenacity of faith and those that don't.

(1) Condition of Jews returning from the captivity.

(2) Some spoke against the Lord: What profit is there to serving God? It is vain to serve God. Why should we walk humbly before God when He blesses the proud and unbeliever and forget's his own people. They had quit paying tithes.

(3) Then there were those who *feared the Lord and thought upon his name. They spoke often to encourage one another.* You can bet they paid tithes. Their names were written in a book of remembrance and God called them his Jewels. The introduction to Malachi 3 read:

Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Mal 3:2-3)

Their reward: God promised to open the windows of heaven and pour them out a blessing that there would be no room to contain it.

b. Mordecai & Haman: From Gallows to a Parade

*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick:
But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*
(Pro 13:12)

III. TRUTH: *He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.* (Job 13:16)

Joh 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

a. The most popular doctrine is salvation without works. Faith without works is dead. But faith that is not based upon truth is blind faith. Your faith needs to be underpinned by the word of God.

b. No hypocrite shall come before him: A hypocrite is someone who pretends to have faith. He may say all the right things and may even act like a righteous man but if his faith is not based upon the truth, he has built his house upon the sand.

Eph 4:4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Joh 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

Joh 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

CONCLUSION: Don't just believe the gospel – obey the gospel (Acts 2:38)

The word must become flesh – faith must lead to trust. True trust will take you to the end through the tenacity of faith which is based upon the truth:

Trust – Tenacity - Truth