

The Foundation of Faith

(LESSON 4) PART 1

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We have had a few lessons on faith. Just now, we desire to consider another phase of faith: the faith of God, or our faith in God, which is the great battle ground of Satan.

You remember Paul said: *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."* (2 Timothy 4:7)

Satan always fights our faith, as far as trying to defeat and discourage us. He fights us because he is fearful that we will discover how valuable faith is and what great results it brings to have real faith in God.

In fact, it is written: *"Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."* (Mark 11:22-23)

Nothing shall be impossible unto us. Jesus told the man Mark 9, who had the epileptic boy: *"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."* (Mark 9:23)

When we are trusting God and have faith in Him, we will not be further deceived by Satan, as there is no greater proof of having faith and that is that real faith in God always brings real results in the present moment.

When the results are not apparent and the answers not forthcoming, we may rest assured there is something we are not believing, something wrong with our faith in God.

We are not following Him; for the very moment we believe Him, He is compelled to hear and answer—the pastor said, "I say this with all reverence"—His Word so declares. In fact, our faith lets in the answer.

If the answer does not come, it is a positive fact that we have not heard the Word, nor believed it; therefore, could not receive any good of it.

Many years ago, people used to heat their homes with coal, but if the driver came to their door at home with a ton of coal, and they were at church, they could not receive it. They wanted the coal very badly, but nevertheless, they would not be in a position to receive it. It does not matter whether it is coal, oil, natural gas, firewood, or all that God has for us, we must be in a position to receive it.

God and all that He has, is, or can do, is right at our side, knocking at our door to gain admittance to bring in our deliverances and blessings. All that is necessary on our part is to take this Word at its face value; everything else God is able and willing to do. So, you can see the importance of faith, and what a lack is sustained in our life through unadulterated unbelief.

We may think we are believing God and pretending to have real faith, but we are only fooling ourselves, and being deceived by Satan, because real faith always brings real results, and real faith always accepts the Word of God as the only evidence, which is a better evidence than having the goods in our possession; in other words, that is the goal we are to reach in our faith, that is perfection of faith, where we would rather accept God's Word as sufficient evidence than have the goods right in front of us.

That brings about the death of self and the preparation for Heaven—it is the issue involved; where we will put the Word of God ahead of what we can see and feel.

For instance, let us suppose you had five dollars in your pocket to buy something with; you would have some confidence in those five dollars. As you went to the store for provisions with that money in your hand, you would have more confidence in it than you would in God to whom you were praying for your daily bread. You would not have the right attitude.

The pastor continued, "I remember one day having two dollars in my pocket and I congratulated myself that I would not have to trust God for my daily bread that day. I thought I was trusting all the time, I did not know I was full of unbelief and going entirely by sight and feeling. Before I reached home, I discovered I had lost the two dollars, so I had to trust God after all.

Many people when they had their coal stored in for the winter congratulated themselves that they would not have to trust God for coal for that winter. Our faith in God is more valuable than any coal or heating oil we could ever need. It would be far better to do without any coal, if that would bring us to the place where we would trust in the promises of God that would mean more to us than to have the whole cellar full of coal.

When we reach that place of faith and confidence in the living God, we would also be able to get all the coal or heating oil we needed for the winter.

The Word of God means more to us than all the coal which can be mined, and it is very necessary for us to reach that point. Many people are praying for their deliverances, but they never get to the place where they believe His Word in order to receive the results which the Word promises. When we come to the place that we believe our husbands, wives, and children—after we have prayed for them—are little angels with their wings sprouted, only because God's Word says so, we shall receive just what we have asked for.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:23-24)

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark 11:24)

The Word of God does not mean anything to most people. They pray and when there are

no results, they settle down and say, "I guess there is something mysterious about the truth of God." Satan begins with his doubts and fears, and they accept them, and those doubts and fears become larger and greater than the promises of God, which do not mean very much to them. They go entirely by what they can see and feel, they gauge their actions by what the devil is doing through Harry, George, and Lizzie, and cannot see anything that God is, has, or can do.

Such an attitude throttles faith and hinders God from helping us. This is not an arbitrary rule or principle; but—as we have said before—God does for us all that we permit Him to do. No one can do anything for another unless they believe their word. They cannot possibly do anything for us except we believe their word. No one can do anything for anyone who does not believe they will do what they promise.

These gifts of God are absolutely OURS; all the spiritual blessings, all the physical blessings, all the financial blessings, everything we desire, God says when we pray, we are to BELIEVE that we receive, and we SHALL HAVE. It does not require any extraordinary faith, just the kind of faith we have in dealing with men every day of our lives.

When an honest, reliable person tells us something is going to be done, or we order goods from the grocery store and they tell us they will be delivered at a certain time, we believe it without any extraordinary faith. That is all that faith in God is. God's Word says the moment we pray, in Jesus' name, WE SHALL RECEIVE.

We pray to God for our loved ones to be saved. We ask it in Jesus' name and then get up and say, "Well, I hope sometime, somewhere they will be changed." That is the extent of our faith, which is no faith at all. If we pray for a husband, wife, or children, we are to be as dead

sure that they are kind, gentle, loving, and angelic as if we saw them so—as if they had been that way for the last twenty years.

People have prayed for healing time after time but never believe they are well. It does not do us any good to pray for healing until we are ready to believe that we receive when we ask. Whenever we are really ready to believe God, we can ask for healing, but what is the use of asking if we do not believe we are going to receive.

We would be better off to have fewer prayers and make them more definite and real. We should settle it that we are going to accept God's Word as sufficient evidence that the work is done WHEN WE PRAY, not the next day, not next week or month, but IMMEDIATELY—in the present moment. Real faith, which is simply believing what God says always brings real results. We want to see that right down in our hearts is where the battle ground is.

No doubt each one present here has some special request. One will say, "The greatest blessing I could receive would be to have the devil cast out of my home and to have perfect peace in my home. I ask that request tonight, in the name of Jesus Christ." Now stop right there. I want you to consider what Jesus Christ said when He went away. *"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."* (John 16:24)

We get down here and pray that the devil be cast out of our homes, that the children may be made obedient and good and made to act just right; that our wives will not become angry and nagging; that our husbands will stop their complaining, that they will not be cranky and disagreeable.

Now after that prayer is offered, Satan will be very active, there will be suggestions placed into our minds and hearts from Satan—so gentle and soft, like a south wind blowing; we would never detect that it was the devil. He will softly

and mildly picture the condition of our loved ones, and we will find ourselves saying, "I do wish Mary was a better girl," That thought will come into our minds, but Satan is back of it and has placed it there. "I wonder if John will ever be any better: My! I do wish I had the victory."

Beloved, the moment we accept those suggestions, that moment we have laid God's Word aside and have said by our actions, "God, you are a liar; Satan you are telling the truth." That makes it rather serious. I want to tell you prayer is a most valuable thing; prayer is one of the greatest privileges we can enjoy. God is just delighted to have us ask for what we desire and is just as much delighted to answer prayer until our joy is full. *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."* (Matthew 7:7-8)

God is delighted to answer prayer for us; hence, it makes it a serious thing to know just what we are doing when we go to pray. In the first place it develops our faith, because it causes our dependence to be in the living God alone, which places us in a position to have the prayer answered. We can be very careless about our prayer life. In the morning, we might say a few words: "Lord, I thank you for your presence during the night, for keeping my family and me. Make me well, strong, and prosperous in all things today. Amen."

Such a position does not really mean anything with God. We should get down before God and take a promise and pray as it directs and definitely settle it to believe just what that promise says, keep that promise before us the entire day, believing it instead of the lies of the devil when he presents his suggestions, doubts and fears.

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