

Church of the Promise

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Infusion

Become

Believe

Belong

Befriend

4 Strengthen and
Increase Your Faith

INFUSING THE LIFE FOUND IN CHRIST
THROUGH FAITH IN GOD'S VITAL PRECEPTS,
MAKING EVERY MEMBER WHOLE
SPIRIT, SOUL & BODY

Strengthen and Increase Your Faith

Session 4



The Bible places great importance upon our faith. It is an essential element to our spiritual growth, like the air we breathe. So, then it is very important that we understand what it is in God's view, and then increase it in our lives.

In this lesson, you will:

- Discover what faith is according to the Bible.
- Learn how to increase and release your faith.
- Find out how to keep your faith strong until the answer comes.

This passage is a prayer that Paul wrote for the Ephesians' church. He asks that we be strengthened in our "inner most being" so that we might know the love of Christ.

Ephesians 3:14-21 (You may pray this for yourself, substitute "you" for 'me' or 'I!')

14. For this reason I kneel before the Father,

15. from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

16. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

17. so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

18. may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

19. and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

20. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

21. *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

I. _____ is the foundation of our faith

Since love is a good thing why would you need to get stronger to receive it?

- a) Our carnal nature is distorted and doesn't even recognize what true love is. Sometimes we reject God's love because we are too emotionally, mentally, or spiritually weak to receive it
- b) The Gospel is not only about being loved, it is also about loving. When Christ placed His love toward us it brought Him to:
 - a. the **Garden of Gethsemane**
 - b. then to **Golgotha**
 - c. then to the **Grave**
 - d. and then to **Glory**.

To develop the love of Christ in our hearts we also will go on a faith journey. As you abide in Him, that will take you through your own Gethsemane, Golgotha, Grave and finally to Glory. You will need to be strengthened in the "inner man" (your spirit) to grow the faith, hope and love you need for the trip.

The foundation of your faith is the knowledge of God's love toward you. His love saw you, condemned to death, struggling in bondage of sin. He was moved to do something. He was not content to allow you to be destroyed. The only way to rescue you was to humble Himself and become a man. As that man, who was Jesus Christ, he was humiliated, rejected, mocked, beaten beyond recognition and crucified. As His blood was spilled the penalty of our sin was satisfied. He had earned a righteousness that he could share with us. He gave it to anyone who would take it and walk in it. Not only did He give us His righteousness but he gave us His authority so that we could deny Satan and his demons access to our lives and the lives we have authority over. The whip that struck his back and tore his flesh also tore us free from sickness and infirmities. The work he accomplished in his death struck a settled end to Satan's rule over your life. **You are free!**

II. What is Faith?

Faith is a _____ and an _____.

The same Greek word translated as “conviction” in *Hebrews 11:1* was also translated “title deed” in some ancient secular documents written during the time of the New Testament. Faith then, is like a title deed to property. It is not the property but the proof of ownership. There are two distinctions of faith, Natural and supernatural but in both cases the scripture sums it up like this:

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. -- King James

1. Faith is so real it is actually called a “substance.” The Greek word literally means “that which stands under” something else or “provides the basis for” something else. It is the foundation on which you can stand and on which you build your life.
2. Faith is also “the conviction or evidence of things not seen.” Faith deals with things you cannot see. Things which are invisible.” *By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” (Hebrews 11:3)* It gives us the ability to imitate our Father’s actual creative ability.
3. There is a difference shown here between the visible and invisible worlds. Your senses relate to that which is seen, but faith takes you behind the visible to the invisible. This is where faith works. *“For we walk by faith, not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7)*

I. The god of this world says, _____ _ _____.

- A. Faith and sight are opposed to one another. If you walk by sight, (The five senses) you do not need faith. If you walk by faith you do not need sight. This is contrary to our natural way of thinking. The world says, “Seeing is believing.” The Bible turns it around and says believing enables you to really see! David wrote the following:

Psalm 27:13

“I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living”

Jesus said, “*Blessed is he who having not seen, yet believes.*” The need to see evidence sets you up for a hardened heart in which faith cannot grow. There is no faith needed to witness things that are. Jesus said cursed is the generation that seeks after a sign.

In the scripture, the only people that received miraculous intervention from Jesus were those who exercised some measure of faith in His ability to shatter what was visible and bring forth what could not be seen. It is the basis of the Genesis. God called forth light from nothing. By His spoken Word the world was formed. With a word He set a boundary in eternity that we know as time. He is the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the end.

God responded as men and women reached for what they could not see. They could only reach for the vision the Lord placed in their hearts because it did not exist in the natural. Faith is the legal tender of heaven, without it no one can please God.

So is faith the same as to just foolishly believe what ever our imaginations conjure up? No, you grow your faith by believing what the written, inspired word of God says about God, about mankind and about you.

III. How do we get faith?

1. The scripture speaks of everyone receiving a measure of faith. Like priming a pump, He gives us what we need to get started. Supernatural faith is a _____ from the Holy Spirit.

Romans 1:5

Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.

Romans 12:3

For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.

2. Natural faith is _____ as our spiritual hearing grasps the revealed word of God.

Romans 10:17

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

IV. What does our faith do?

Hebrews chapter 11 is called the *Heroes of faith* chapter. It is a list of everyday, ordinary people like yourself who took hold of many things through the power of their faith in God. The following scriptures just highlight some of the things that strong faith can provide to the believer.

- 1. Faith fully persuades and is the state of being fully convinced. Faith makes the invisible as fully visible and waits with expectation for it to manifest.**

visible

invisible

Romans 4:18

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

19. Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead--since he was about a hundred years old--and that Sarah's womb was also dead.

20. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

21. being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

- 2. Faith justifies.**

Romans 3:28

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

- 3. Faith adds righteousness to our account.**

James 2:23

And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

Romans 1:17.

For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

4. Faith is the conduit of our salvation.

Romans 10:6-10

But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' "(that is, to bring Christ down)"or 'Who will descend into the deep?' "(that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

2 Peter 1:3-10

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;

and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make you calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,

V. Building upon Faith and reaching Love

Now we are not to stop with faith alone. As the Holy Spirit leads us to increased faith we progress toward God's brand of love. It seems like it should be easy to love. But our un-regenerated flesh nature draws us to gratify ourselves. This is a problem because "Love does not seek its own." 2 Peter 1:5-8 shows us how God teaches us to walk in Christ's love in progressive stages or steps. Just as a tree's trunk keeps growing in size while it produces branches and they both keep growing while it produces leaves, then flowers & fruit, each level is building upon the last and all continuing to dynamically increase God's nature in each of us.

1. The first thing on the list is our _____.
2. Then we add to our increasing faith, _____.
3. Then we add to increasing goodness, knowledge
4. and to knowledge, self-control,
5. Then to self control we add perseverance, Godliness and brotherly kindness to that
6. until we finally begin to express the most easily recognized attribute of His divine nature, which is _____.

This is the growth chart of every Christian. This is Growth that is not measured in inches; but in the height and stature of their Christ like nature.

VI. Faith is an everyday thing.

Faith is something we must increase in and practice daily. Like the manna that was found new everyday by the children of Israel; faith is discovered new every day. As soon as we wake up we should begin our day by saying something like this to the Lord from a sincere heart.

Now mix intentions like these from your own heart with the understanding that God is expecting you to keep that idea throughout your day, because He has set appointments to meet you throughout your day and even into your night through dreams and visions.

You can build a strong mind by gaining _____ and you can build a strong soul by controlling your _____, but to bring strength to your _____ you need to increase your faith.

VII. Why should I use my Faith?

Faith is the key that releases the blessings of God into your life. *“Without faith, it is impossible to please God”* (Hebrews 11:6) With faith the impossible becomes possible.

“With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26)

“All things are possible to him who believes” (Mark 9:23)

Faith is the channel that makes God’s possibilities available to you. By faith, believers have received financial blessings, been spared from judgment, received strength to endure horrific persecution and hardship, escaped danger, became mighty in battle, received their dead loved ones back to life and obtained approval from God. (*Hebrews 11*).

VIII. The difference between faith and _____.

Mark 11:24:

“Therefore, I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you”

Romans 5:1-2:

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

1. Faith receives _____ while hope looks to the _____. Faith is the substance, something that is actually there. Hope is an expectation of something to come. Faith counts it done, hope waits. (*Colossians 1:21-23*)

- a. If someone says, “I believe God will heal me: what they really mean is, “I hope He’ll heal me tomorrow.” That is not faith

because faith is something that you have now. If you keep directing your expectation toward the future, you are substituting hope for faith. (*Hebrews 11:13*)

- b. When does Jesus tell you to receive what you pray for? Is it at some undetermined point in the future? No – but at the very moment that you pray. You “ask” and at the same moment you “receive” even though the manifestation of the answer to your prayer may yet be in the future.

IX. _____ corrodes your faith and causes it to diminish.

James 1:6-7:

“But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord”

- a. Doubt is like water in a gas tank – it does not mix with the gas and it clogs up the carburetor, causing the engine to miss and malfunction. Doubt and faith do not mix together. And doubt works to prevent faith from acting.
- b. You must guard your heart from everything that could weaken or undermine your faith. “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life” (*Proverbs 4:23 KJV*) Do not receive a false report that contradicts God or His word.

1. How to release your faith

In *Mark 11:22-25*, Jesus gave eight important elements in building and releasing your faith.

22. "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. 23. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. 24. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours 25. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone,

forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins

(This is mountain moving faith)

- A. Find the _____ of God, and pray it in your life.
- B. “*Have faith in God*” - Make God the _____ of your faith.
- C. “*Whosoever*” - God will answer _____ prayers if you will meet the conditions of faith.
- D. “*Shall say*” and “*shall have whatsoever he saith*” - You must _____ to your mountain of need before it will move.
- E. “*This mountain... be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea.*” - You are to be _____ in your requests.
- F. “*Shall not doubt in his heart*” - Give no place for doubt in your heart.
- G. “*What things so ever you desire*” - Put no _____ on God’s ability to answer your request.
- H. “*When you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.*” - Believe that you _____ them and you shall have what you believe.
- I. “*When you stand praying, forgive*” - Guard against _____ . (Or any other faith robber)

2. Let’s make the steps clear

I John 5:14-15

14. *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*

15. *And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

- a. **Believe in your _____.**

Romans 10:9,10

9. *That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

b. Keep a good _____ regarding your faith.

When the woman whose child died went to the prophet for help, she was asked by the servant how her son was doing. By faith she confessed that it was well with her child.

2 Kings 4:26

“Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, ‘is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?’ And she answered, ‘it is well’

4. _____ the answer to your prayers.

The widow who needed money was told by the prophet Elijah to get empty pots and pour the oil she had into each vessel. God filled the number of pots to be filled.

II Kings 4:6

” And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, ‘bring me yet a vessel.’ And he said unto her, there is not a vessel more.’ And the oil stayed.” (KJV)

Faith cometh! “So, then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.’ A single word in this verse needs to grip your heart. The word is “cometh.” If you do not have faith, you can get it by planting the Word of God deep within your heart. Your faith will automatically become active and vibrant through you hearing the word.

4. Follow the _____!

When a doctor gives a person medicine, the directions for taking it are on the bottle. The Word of God is like a medicine bottle; we need to carefully read the directions that are included.

Proverbs 4:20-22

“My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in

the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and health (medicine) to all their whole body” (NASB)

5. _____ the devil and loose your blessing from his grasp in the name of Jesus.

Matthew 16:19

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

6. Keep your faith strong until the answer comes.

- A. Keep the _____ of God before you as Abraham did.**

Romans 4:21

“And being fully persuaded that, What He had promised He was able also to perform.” (KJV)

- B. Do not stagger in _____, going from side to side but stay focused on what God has said.**

Romans 4:20

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” (KJV)

- C. Find another believer who will stand with you in prayer.**

Matthew 18:19,20

“19“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

- D. Be diligent in your confession & prayer, never contradicting or giving up.**

Luke 18:1

“And He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”

- E. Be bold at the throne of grace, obtaining mercy and grace in your time of need.**

Hebrews 4:16

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

The faith we have been discussing is generated by the Holy Spirit and increased as we believe and act upon the Word of God. This kind of faith is also known as “Word of Faith”. It is fundamental to your prayer life, fellowship, and walk with the Lord and His people. There is another kind of faith that is by the power of the Holy Spirit as He wills. It is the Gift of Faith which is described in chapter ten.

THIS WEEK’S BIBLE READING: Judges

Use the Bible Study tool as you read. Return your completed form for credit. You will get much more from the time if you prepare in advance by reading prayerfully through the assignment:

Answer Key:

Pg 3- Love, substance, evidence	Pg 10- doubt,
Pg 4 - seeing is believing	Pg. 11- will, center, your, speak,
Pg 5- gift, increased	specific, limit, received, un-
Pg 8 - faith, goodness	forgiveness,
Pg 9- knowledge, emotions, spirit,	Pg.12- heart, confession, expect,
hope, now, future	directions
	Pg. 13- bind up, promises, unbelief