

SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
BIBLE SCHOOL THIRD EDITION
SESSION 39– FAITH PART 5
WHAT FAITH IS PART 3

Hebrews 11:1, **“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”**

Faith means we have confidence in what we hoped for instead of seeing, feeling, or knowing it from the physical standpoint before we believe. Faith gives substance to the thing that you hope for when you believe you have received your petition *before you have it*.

In other words, what the Bible is saying is simply this: Faith is taking hold of the unseen realm of hope and bringing it into the realm of reality. We know, of course, that faith grows out of hearing the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**). We have learned that faith is not hope and hope is not faith.

Faith says, “I have it now.” Hope says, “I will get it sometime. Faith is present tense; hope is future tense.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church, said that many people who are in the church are not really saved. They have just mentally subscribed to certain truths. They have agreed that certain things are true *in their minds*, but not *in their hearts*. Wesley was referring to head faith versus heart faith for receiving salvation or the new birth; but the same is true concerning healing, receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or an answer to prayer.

Many times, people who are agreeing mentally with God’s Word think that all the time they are really believing. I will show you how you can tell the difference.

Faith says, “It is mine. I have it now.” Mental assent says, “I know I should have it, but for some reason or other I don’t get it.”

Those people are mentally agreeing with what the Word says but they are not believing. They are mentally assenting with the word. They are agreeing mentally that the Word is true, but they are not appropriating God’s promises for themselves. Many times, people call hope, believing. But hope is not believing and believing is not hope.

People who only mentally assent to God's Word may say, "I believe that I am going to get my healing." That's still not faith, that is hope. People call that believing, but it is not believing. It is hope because it is in the future tense.

Hope won't work for receiving from God. It is faith that receives from God. For example, God gave the Holy Spirit to the Church on the Day of Pentecost (**Acts 2:1-4**). All believers need to do is receive Him. Also, our healing was bought and paid for by the stripes of Jesus and by His redemptive work on the Cross. (**Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:17; I Peter 2:24**.) What we as Christians must do, is accept by faith what God has ALREADY PROVIDED for us.

THOMAS' FAITH VS. ABRAHAM'S FAITH

Let's look at the difference between head faith and heart faith:

John 20:25-29, *"²⁵The other disciples therefore said unto him, 'We have seen the Lord,' but he (Thomas) said unto them, 'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.' ²⁶ and after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. ²⁷ Then saith he to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.' ²⁸ And Thomas answered and said unto him, 'My Lord and my God.'²⁹ Jesus saith unto him, 'Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believed.'"*

Romans 4:17-21, *"¹⁷ (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.¹⁸ Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, 'So shall thy seed be.'¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God: ²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."*

Can you see any difference between Abraham's faith and Thomas' faith? Decidedly, yes! Thomas said, *"I won't believe unless I can see the print of the nails and see the wound in his side"* (**John 20:25**). Jesus said, *"...because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they THAT HAVE NOT SEEN, AND YET HAVE believed"* (v. 29).

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Then look at Abraham who *“...calleth those things which be not as though they were”* (Romans 4:17). Which faith is Bible faith? Of course, Abraham’s faith is, because our text in Hebrews 11:1 says, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things NOT SEEN.”*

Abraham is mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11 as having faith which pleased God (Hebrews 11:8-12). Abraham’s faith was based on *“...being fully persuaded that, what he [God] had promised, he was able also to perform”* (Romans 4:21). Abraham believed God and he believed God’s promises.

BIBLE FAITH

Here is a little formula for the faith that pleases God. You can make this Bible faith work for you. It is the same faith that Abraham used, and it worked for him because it is faith that is based on what **GOD** has said.

1. Receive God’s Word for what you desire to receive from God
2. Believe God’s Word
3. Consider not the contradictory circumstances.
4. Give praise to God for the answer

Follow these four steps and you’ll always get the desired result because these are four certain or sure steps to deliverance, healing, answered prayers, or what ever it is that you are seeking from God.

Then notice Thomas’ faith. Thomas’ faith was not based upon what God said: Thomas’ faith was based upon what his own physical senses told him. For example, Thomas said he would not believe unless he could **see**.

Many people say, “When I see it or when I feel it then I’ll know I have my petition,” but that is not bible faith. That’s natural human faith and any sinner already has that kind of faith. You see, real faith in God is based upon the Word of God. Real faith in the Word says, “If God says it is true, then it is true.” Believing God is believing His word!

Smith Wigglesworth, a great General of faith, once said, “I can’t understand God by feelings. I cannot understand the Lord Jesus Christ by feelings. I can understand God the

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Father and Jesus Christ only by what the Word says about them. God is everything the Word says He is.” He went on to say, “We need to get acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ through His Word.”

Too many people try to get acquainted with God through feelings, and when they feel good, they think God has heard them. But if they don’t feel good, they think He is not hearing them. Their faith is based on their feelings, but Bible faith is based upon God’s Word.

If God’s Word says He hears me, then I know He hears me because He said so, and His Word cannot lie. In other words, if my faith is based upon my feelings, then I am just using a natural human faith. I am trying to get spiritual results with natural human faith, and I cannot do that. I must use scriptural faith, Bible faith, and believe God’s Word. If my faith is based upon the Word of God, then I believe the Word regardless of evidence which would satisfy my physical senses.

Too many people are trying to get Abraham’s blessing with Thomas’ faith, and that just won’t work. We who are believers have the Abraham kind of faith because **Galatians 3:29** says, **“And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** And **Galatians 3:7** says, **“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”** We have the Abraham kind of faith. We are not trying to get it; we have it.

A preacher once held a meeting at a church and there was a woman minister who had come forward in the healing line time after time and never got her healing. The Pastor asked the preacher why. He told him that this woman was well known in that area and there were other people who were not responding for healing because they felt that if she couldn’t get her healing, they couldn’t either.

The preacher holding the meeting asked the Lord to help him understand. If he couldn’t get this woman to see where she was missing it and what faith is, at least he wanted the Lord to help him show the people in the congregation what faith is. The Lord told him he wouldn’t be able to get her to see it, but to use her as an example so the rest of the congregation could understand what faith is.

When the preacher came to her in the healing line, he prayed for her. When he finished, she began to feel the place on her body where she was sick. Immediately she said, “No, I haven’t gotten it yet. Pray again.” So, the preacher prayed again, and when he finished, she began to do the same thing.

Finally, the preacher told her, “I’ll pray for you one more time and then you can go sit down.” When he got through praying the third time, the Lord told him exactly what to do to help the congregation. By this time, she had gone up the aisle and back to her seat. The preacher called her back down from her seat to where he was standing and said, “Sister, I want to ask you a question.” She said, “All right, go ahead!”

The preacher asked her, “When are you going to start believing you are healed?”

“Well,” she said, “when I get healed.”

The preacher said, “What in the world would you want to believe it then for? You would know it then.”

She said, “Say that again.”

The preacher made that statement to her four more times, and she never did get it. But the majority of the congregation understood what he said, and afterwards, many of them came into the healing line and were healed.

You see, she was trying to grasp that truth with her mind, but you can’t, because your mind can’t grasp things in the spiritual realm. But if you listen to your spirit, there’s something that responds on the inside of you because your heart knows it is so.

DIVINE HEALING IS SPIRITUAL HEALING

Anyone can believe what he can feel, hear, or see. In the natural realm as human beings, we operate in the physical realm most of the time. And in the natural realm you do have to walk by sight. But I am talking about when it comes to Bible things. When it comes to spiritual things, we don’t walk by sight. In the supernatural realm we walk by faith, and not by sight (**II Cor. 5:7**).

God’s healing is spiritual healing. If medical science heals, it heals through the physical. Christian Science, for example, heals through the mind. But when God heals, He heals through the Spirit.

Spiritual healing – divine healing – is received from God the Father the same way the new birth, which is a rebirth of our spirits is received.

SALVATION IS A SPIRITUAL REBIRTH

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You see, when you were born again, it is not your body that is born again, for you still have the same body you always had. The bible says, ***“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...”*** (II Corinthians 5:17).

That verse is not talking about your body being made new. The new birth does not change the physical man. The new birth changes the spirit man on the inside. After you get saved, the man on the inside is to dominate the physical man, and *you will* have to do something with your own body (I Cor. 9:27). But it is the man on the inside, the inner man, that is born again.

The new birth is the rebirth of the human spirit. Jesus said in John 3:6, ***“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*** When a person is born again, you cannot tell just by looking at him what has happened to him on the inside. But in the process of time, it will show up on the outside too.

When a person is born again, you can't tell at that moment just what has happened on the inside of him, because the new birth is a rebirth of the human spirit. If that person walks in the light that he has, it will show up on the outside too.

We have been fooled many, many times by people who have come to the altar. They pray and cry and jump and hug others and act so happy, but then you never see them anymore. All the time we thought they had received something. But in many cases, it was just an emotional experience, but not the new birth.

Then there are other people who come to be saved and aren't emotional at all. By appearance you might wonder if they got anything at all. They aren't at the altar long enough, you think, to receive anything from the Lord. But many of these folks become outstanding Christians during their lifetime.

You see, what happens is our faith many times is based upon our physical senses. Now, I certainly believe in feelings, but I put feelings last when it comes to faith and prayer.

God's Word comes first. Faith in God's Word comes second. And feelings come last. Too many people turn it around and put feelings first, faith in their feelings second, and the word of God last. Those people will never be a success in anything.

Divine healing comes the same way as the new birth. It comes through our spirit. It does not always show up immediately on the outside. Heart faith is Bible faith. Remember, Romans 10:10 says, ***“...with the heart man believeth...”*** Your heart is your spirit, and healing begins in your spirit. It begins on the inside of you and works to the outside.

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RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A SPIRITUAL REALITY

Whether you realize it or not the same thing is true about receiving the Holy Spirit, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Receiving the Holy Spirit is a spiritual experience and not a physical or mental experience. Actually, we may call receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit an experience, but it is much more than that.

In the new birth, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in your spirit and your body becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16). Then in the baptism of the Holy Spirit you are filled to a greater measure with the Holy Spirit so that you may live in the power of God to bless others and be a witness. (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5, 8.)

The only reason your body becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost is that your body is the temple or house of your own spirit, and the Holy Spirit is dwelling in your spirit. You cannot contact God with your mind. God is not a mind. God is a Spirit (John 4:24).

Now again, God is not “spirit” like some people think of “spirit.” He is a divine Spirit Being. You see “spirit” to many people just means an influence in the atmosphere somewhere. But God is a divine Personality. You can’t contact God with your mind, and you can’t contact God with your body. You contact God with your spirit for He is a Spirit Being.

This is exactly where many miss it when it comes to receiving the Holy Ghost. They try to receive the Holy Ghost mentally or they try to receive the Holy Ghost physically. They are wanting a physical experience, but it is a spiritual experience. The only physical part of receiving the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. That is, the Holy Spirit will give you utterance, but **you** must yield to the Holy Spirit and speak out the utterance He gives. The utterance the Holy Spirit gives you comes out of your spirit. But you yield to the Holy Spirit and do the speaking.

Paul says in First Corinthians 14:14, **“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.”** The Amplified translation reads, **“For if I pray in an [unknown] tongue, my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays...”** In other words, it is the Holy Spirit within you who gives you the ability to speak with other tongues.

Many times, when it comes to receiving from God, it is difficult to get people out of the mental realm, for they must receive from God in the spiritual realm first. Whether people realize it or not, many people are trying to reach out with their minds and mentally receive the Holy Ghost.

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FLESHLY DEMONSTRATION IS NOT NECESSARY IN RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

In receiving the Holy Spirit, it is not necessary for a physical display to take place either. I do not care a thing in the world about physical appearances or actions being displayed when I lay hands on someone to receive the Holy Spirit. What is important is spiritual actions – that is, Bible-based actions. People need to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost that God has already freely given by faith.

I've heard people working at the altar say to those seeking the Holy Spirit, "Holler louder so God will hear you." If God heard people because they hollered louder, then we ought to put a microphone in front of them so they could holler louder.

Teaching like that causes people to think that it is physical action to which God responds. This is not true. God responds to faith (**Hebrews 11:6**).

Some say they need to raise their hands higher so God will hear. If that were the case, you might just as well go up on the roof of the church and raise your hands, if higher is what it takes. Do you see how ridiculous that sounds?

Doing things such as hollering louder and raising your hands up higher are just physical actions that won't necessarily produce any lasting spiritual result. When people do these things and receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the emotional actions subside, they are likely to say, "Maybe I didn't receive after all."

Receiving the Holy Spirit is not an experience. It is way more than that. It is receiving the Holy Spirit, the divine Third Person of the Godhead. And He comes to make His home in the believer's heart.

John 14:16, *"¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."*

The Holy Spirit comes to live and dwell in you, and then you must learn to respond to Him. When you receive the infilling or baptism of the Holy Spirit, He will give you the utterance, but you are to respond to Him by **you** doing the speaking. Many people fail here because they base their faith on physical evidence. They don't believe they have received the Holy Ghost until they speak in other tongues. That is wrong. They must believe that they have received the Holy Spirit, then He will grant the utterance.

Don't get the cart before the horse! In **Acts 2:4** it says, *"**And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost...**"* If you stop reading there, it just says they were all filled. But keep reading,

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“...they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and [THEY] began to speak with other tongues.” They began to speak with other tongues after they were filled.

DON'T TRY GOD'S WORD – BELIEVE AND ACT ON IT!

God's Word works for everyone if the person will only believe it, not try to believe. The Word will not work if you just try it or hope it will work. No, it is believing faith, apart from physical circumstances, that gets the job done. We walk by faith and not by sight when it comes to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, healing, an answer to prayer, as well as receiving anything else from God.

In the natural we do have to go by our senses. For example, if you are crossing the street and your eyes tell you there are cars coming, you need to have enough sense to wait until the cars pass before you proceed to cross the street! In things in the natural realm, you walk by natural faith, faith in your sight, smell, feelings. Therefore, there are many areas in which we have to walk by faith in our physical senses.

But many people are trying to believe God with their physical senses or with natural, human faith. If their physical senses tell them their prayer hasn't been answered, then they believe their physical senses, instead of the Word of God.

Physical senses have absolutely nothing to do with the bible. God's Word is true whether you feel like it is or not. God's Word is true whether it looks like it is true or not. God's Word is true all the time regardless of your feelings. No matter what the circumstances, God's Word is still true.

I can't teach faith any plainer than that. That is as plain as it gets. Put your faith in what the Word of God says rather than in what your senses tell you. If you can't understand faith yet, you just keep going back over these lessons and continue to study God's Word. Eventually your mind will be renewed with the Word and the light will come on.