

THE GIFT OF FAITH

“And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:5–6, NASB95)

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.” (Hebrews 11:8, NASB95)

THE GIFT OF FAITH

- 1 Corinthians 12:9a (NASB95)
 ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit...
- Hebrews 11:1 (NASB95) —
 1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
 - **Assurance** 5287-ὑπόστασις *hupostasis*; from 5259 and 2476; a support, substance, steadiness, hence assurance:—assurance(2), confidence(2), nature(1).
Thomas, R. L. (1998). New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.
 - **Conviction** 1650 -ἔλεγχος *elegchos*; from 1651; a proof, test:—conviction(1); translated as **evidence** (KJV)
Thomas, R. L. (1998). New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

SAVING FAITH

- Saving Faith: “The response to God’s calling in which salvation occurs...”¹
 - It is, “the result of the word, the message, going forth in the power of the Spirit.”²
 - Ephesians 2:8 (NASB95) — 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.
- Our Walk of Faith:
 - Hebrews 11:1 (AMP) — 1 NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the **proof** of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

¹ & ² J. Rodman Williams, Renewal Theology, Vol. 2, pg. 28

OUR LIFE OF FAITH

- Hebrews 11:6 (NASB95)

And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God **must believe** that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- Hebrews 10:38–39 (NASB95) || Romans 1:17 || Galatians 3:11

³⁸BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.

³⁹But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

WE RECEIVE FROM THE LORD BY FAITH

- Hebrews 4:1–2 (NASB95)

¹Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

²For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; **but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.**

– The hardness of our heart and our disobedience can keep us from receiving just as it did for those who died in the desert.

- Hebrews 4:6–7 (NASB95)

⁶Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them **failed to enter because of disobedience,**

⁷He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, **“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.”**

THE PROGRESSION OF OUR FAITH

Discernment of faith

Faith as a grain of mustard seed.... Matthew 17:20

We have the idea that God rewards us for our faith, it may be so in the initial stages; **but we do not earn anything by faith.** Faith brings us into right relationship with God and gives God His opportunity. God has frequently to knock the bottom board out of your experience if you are a saint in order to get you into contact with Himself. **God wants you to understand that it is a life of faith, not a life of sentimental enjoyment of His blessings.** Your earlier life of faith was narrow and intense, settled around a little sun-spot of experience that had as much of sense as of faith in it, full of light and sweetness; then God withdrew His conscious blessings in order to teach you to walk by faith. You are worth far more to Him now than you were in your days of conscious delight and thrilling testimony.

Faith by its very nature must be tried, and the real trial of faith is not that we find it difficult to trust God, but that God's character has to be cleared in our own minds. Faith in its actual working out has to go through spells of unsyllabled isolation. Never confound the trial of faith with the ordinary discipline of life. Much that we call the trial of faith is the inevitable result of being alive. **Faith in the Bible is faith in God against every thing that contradicts Him**—'I will remain true to God's character whatever He may do.' **“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him”**—**this is the most sublime utterance of faith in the whole of the Bible.**

Chambers, O. (1986). My utmost for his highest: Selections for the year. Grand Rapids, MI: Oswald Chambers Publications; Marshall Pickering.

FAITH, HOPE & LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:4–13 (NASB95)

- 4 Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant,
5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong
suffered,
6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
8 Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are* tongues, they will
cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away.
9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part;
10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.
11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I
did away with childish things.
12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as
I also have been fully known.
13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

THE GIFT OF FAITH

- The Gift of Faith is given to empower the believer to engage in the mighty works of the Holy Spirit that He has revealed that He wants to do, believing for things that are far beyond human reason (impossible in the natural).
 - Examples
 - The command for new body parts to come forth.
 - The command for instantaneous healing of disease or condition.
 - Moving in any signs, wonders and miracles to display the mighty works of God.
- It can be coupled together with either a word of wisdom, word of knowledge, prophecy, gift of healings, and/or the effecting of miracles, strengthening and empowering the minister to believe with boldness beyond all doubt that what the Holy Spirit has revealed will be accomplished in His timing now, soon or far into the future.
- It is a faith that comes from and under the control of the Holy Spirit, not man. It is the power of the Holy Spirit and is communicated by word and/or deed.

THE GIFT OF FAITH

- It is unshakable and takes its stand in the heart of the believer like David's stand against Goliath (I Samuel 17:45-51).
- It is super-natural empowerment ***to know, with power***, that the revelation the Holy Spirit has given will be accomplished or performed.
- The power of the Gift of Faith fills the believer to the extent that all doubt and fear is removed.
- Anyone in the Body of Christ can move in the Gift of Faith; it is not limited to those we perceive to be great ministers of the Gospel.
- In many cases, ministers are given the Gift of Faith to believe the Lord with respect to the fulfillment of their mission that depends upon the supernatural and miraculous work of the Holy Spirit.
- It can be given for a specific event or purpose, or it can be abiding element that supports great works and ministry of the Lord through His consecrated servants.
 - Examples: Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Jesus, Peter, & Paul

PETER, JOHN & THE LAME MAN

Acts 3:1–10 (NASB95)

- 1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer.
- 2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.
- 3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms.
- 4 **But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"**
- 5 And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.
- 6 **But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!"**
- 7 **And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.**
- 8 With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.
- 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God;
- 10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to beg alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

PETER, JOHN & THE LAME MAN

- Peter is **galvanized in the Lord's authority** to work a miracle in a man's life who was lame from his mother's womb.
- Peter understands that he has something from the Lord to give this man.
- Peter is operating as an open floodgate of the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to flow through him to the lame man.
- Peter is not operating under his own impulse. He has been filled with the Gift of Faith by the Holy Spirit to move in miraculous power.
- Peter's authority in this instance flows from the Holy Spirit. He is not moving in his own authority.
- The miracle that results comes by, in and through the Holy Spirit.

PAUL - WHEN ALL HOPE WAS LOST

2 Corinthians 1:8–11 (NASB95)

⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, *that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;* ⁹ *indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;* ¹⁰ *who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope.* ¹¹ *And He will yet deliver us,* ¹¹ you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through *the prayers of many.*

PAUL: WHEN ALL HOPE WAS LOST

Acts 27:14–20 (NASB95)

¹⁴ But before very long there rushed down from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo; ¹⁵ and when the ship was caught *in it* and could not face the wind, we gave way *to it* and let ourselves be driven along. ¹⁶ Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get the *ship's* boat under control. ¹⁷ After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on *the shallows* of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along. ¹⁸ The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo; ¹⁹ and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰ **Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.**

PAUL: THE STORM-TOSSED SHIP

Acts 27:21–26 (ESV)

²¹Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.

²²**Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.**

²³**For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship,**

²⁴**and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’**

²⁵So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.

²⁶**But we must run aground on some island.”**

PAUL: THE STORM-TOSSED SHIP

- The angel brought a message (revelation). It could have been that the presence of the angel initiated the activation of the Gift of Faith, but the Bible is silent in this regard.
- The Gift of Faith is, by its very nature, a revelation that fills the heart, mind and soul of the believer. It can be said that it fills your entire being causing you to know that you know what God will do.
- Revelation in the word of wisdom, word of knowledge or prophecy, can come without the faith to do what the Holy Spirit is prompting.
 - Romans 12:6 (NASB95) And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith.
 - Deuteronomy 3:11 (NASB95) “Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?”
 - Deuteronomy 4:12-13 (NASB95) “Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say.” But [Moses] said, “Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever Thou wilt.”

THE GIFT OF FAITH

- It could be said that it is *turbo-charged* faith, but in fact it is *Holy Spirit-charged* faith!
- It operates beyond the reasoning of the mind of man.
- It operates beyond our believing and trusting the Lord to provide for us and to sustain us while we stand upon His Word.
- It launches us to a higher realm of the Holy Spirit than what we normally might experience when we are following Jesus by His Spirit day in and day out.
- There is tremendous clarity regarding what the Lord will do.
- It stands against the consensus of the human majority. It moves above the wisdom of man into the realm of the Almighty.

NOTES ON THE TOPIC OF FAITH

- Faith ***is not*** purchasing a Rolex watch or a car you cannot afford as a way of demonstrating your faith. These are examples of the sin of presumption; presuming God will give you the money to purchase things you cannot afford is to move in self-will and pride.
- The Gift of Faith is not “worked up” nor are we to strive for it. The Gift of Faith is **GIVEN or IMPARTED** and is provided to extend the kingdom of Heaven; it is not given to satisfy our lust.

WHAT THE GIFT OF FAITH IS NOT

- It is not a hyper, “RA-RA” type of faith that really is a pseudo-form of faith that is not Biblical faith at all. This form is nothing but mere emotionalism, which is similar to the prophets of Baal when Elijah confronted Israel (I Kings 18:25-29).
- Pseudo-faith, which is to say a false-faith, can be identified by these components:
 - It claims that we can never say we are sick, because that would be a “bad confession”, which is to say it has a problem with reality.
 - It relies on endless positive confessions based upon Scripture that is not based upon the goodness of God or the truth of His word, but on the believer’s “positive stance”.
 - It is works-based and ultimately it is a faith based upon human effort that disregards the call of the Holy Spirit to spiritual rest.
 - It does not depend upon hearing or seeing what the Holy Spirit is saying or doing, therefore, it is not dependent upon God, but rather the convenient application of Scripture that satisfies our will.

BIBLICAL FAITH

- Biblical faith stands squarely upon Scripture as well as hearing and believing what the Holy Spirit says.
 - Abraham believed God (what He spoke/promised) and it was credited to him as righteousness (Gen 15:1-6; Rom 4:16-24; Gal 3:6; James 2:23)
- Biblical faith looks squarely at the situation, calls it what it is – desperate, hopeless, etc. – and takes that reality before the Throne of God and depends upon the Holy Spirit to reveal His will and believe what He says He will do.

BIBLICAL REALITY CHECK IS DEALING WITH TRUTH

- Example: Jesus said, “Lazarus is dead.” (Jn 11:14)
 - Hyper-faith says, “Do not confess he is dead”, which is silly to the absurd. Hyper-faith cannot handle the truth.
 - If Lazarus was not truly dead, then we could never say that Jesus raised him from the dead.
- The Gift of Faith coupled with the command, “Lazarus, come forth.” penetrated the darkness of death and the grave. It obliterates the darkness displayed in the hearts of scoffers or through the antics of demons that attempt to stand against the will of the Lord.
- In the entirety of the Gospel record, Jesus always faced the truth of the situation, called it what it was, discerned the will of the Father, and then moved in the power of the Holy Spirit to change what was the truth of the situation.

A BIBLICAL REALITY CHECK IS DEALING WITH TRUTH

- King Jehoshaphat did not deny the truth of the fact that three armies (vs. 10 - Ammonites, Moabites, & Edomites) were threatening Judah (II Chron 20, especially vs. 14-19).
 - Note also the account of the righteous leadership and reforms of King Hezekiah that were followed by an invasion and great victory by the hand of the Lord (2 Kgs 18-19; II Chron 29-32:1-23; Is 36-37).
- The Lord fights enemies that exist; not those that we do not wish to acknowledge.

A BIBLICAL REALITY CHECK IS DEALING WITH TRUTH

- Hezekiah did not deny the truth of the situation concerning the King of Assyria; he faced it squarely.
 - **2 Kings 19:3–4 (NASB95)** — **3** They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, ‘This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and rejection; for children have come to birth and there is no strength to deliver. **4** ‘Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.’ ”
 - vs. 3 is not a ‘negative confession’; it is the truth!
 - vs. 4 demonstrates that Hezekiah is ***not*** moving in the Gift of Faith.
- God responds to the truth, not what we want the truth to be.

THE GIFT OF FAITH

- Allows us to stand against the reality of a desperate, hopeless situation and speak the word of the Lord in His power and under His anointing and accomplish great exploits in His Name (Hebrews 11).
- The believer operating in the Gift of Faith becomes a sign that establishes/increases the faith of those who are looking for the Lord to intervene in their situation.
- We must guard ourselves against speaking what we want to happen instead of what the Lord has revealed. Even worse, we dare not say what the Holy Spirit is silent about, thereby moving in presumption. Saying what the Lord has not said and speaking it as if it is the word of the Lord, will result in judgment. It is a grave sin (Genesis 3; Jeremiah 28).
- In faith, we surrender ourselves to the Lord on a daily basis, walking with Him, listening to His voice, obeying when prompted to allow Him to move through us to do His works. As Jesus said, “...The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works” (John 14:10b NASB95).