

LIVING BY FAITH - 3



FAITH WORTH FIGHTING FOR

2 Tim.4:7, Heb.11:34, Jude 1:3, ExoD.14:14, Heb.10:32, 1 Tim.6:12

The scriptures above confirm that FAITH is worth fighting for. The early saints realized quite on time the value of their faith and that was why they kept it with all their might, did all to grow their faith and even begged the Lord to increase their faith.

We could also read from the above scriptures that the fight of faith is not a “*carnal fight*”, it is not a fight of physical combat or one that requires physical hurting. The bible described it as a **Good Fight of Faith**.

Now for us to fully understand this message and for orderly teaching, we will be considering the teaching in the following sections:

I. Extensive Definition of Faith

II. Expensive Deeds of Faith

III. Exercising Diversities of Faith

I. Extensive Definition Of Faith - *Heb.11:1*

There is certainly no other Bible verse that could define faith for us than the one above. The definition of faith in this verse of Scripture can actually be divided into two; The book of **Hebrews11:1** did not just define faith for us, but it defines it in two views or dimensions -

1. The Unfinished Product View and, **1. The Finished Product View**.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for. That is faith as an unfinished product. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. That is faith a finished product. Though we often mix the two definitions together, but it will be better understood if we can take them separately. Now, let's pick them one after the other.

1) The Unfinished Product Definition:

Faith is the (material) substance (made) of things (you) hoped for. Faith is the substance of what you hoped for

That means that if you hope to get anything at all in life and you don't have the power to get it, if you have faith, you already have the (material) substance that can produce what you want for you! For Instance, you want bread but you don't have money to purchase the bread. Then, if you have faith, that means you already possessed the material substance (just like flour) to make bread. Having faith means you have the flour waiting to be turned to eventually bread.

2) The Finished Product Definition:

*Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the **evidence** of what you cannot see*

That means that **"faith is the proof, certificate or receipt of what you cannot see"** For Instance, *you want a car but you've got no money, but you have faith; that means you have the proof, the evidence that the car is yours as long as you have faith, you already have the complete papers, the receipt, the evidence or proof of ownership or possession.* Therefore, **"faith is the receipt, the proof or evidence of ownership of what you cannot see."** Hope that makes it clearer now? That was what the LORD was trying to reveal to us in the lives of the saints of old in the book of Hebrew eleven from verse one.

Imagine the Lord told Abraham to leave his own country (Gen.12:1) Haran, yet he left in faith. Noah, even when he couldn't see the rain coming, he had the evidence that the Lord has spoken to him, and held firmly on to it. (Gen.6:9) Therefore faith often works with patience especially if it is for tangible things. Has God spoken to you that you will get to a certain height or position in life? Please don't faint or let go, fight that good fight of faith to the end. Are you looking for admission? Fight the good fight of faith beloved.

II. Expensive Deeds Of Faith:

This is another part of the message we all must pay full and close attention to because here, we will understand how **expensive** faith is; the **worth** of our faith, the **value** of our faith, the things faith does for us are beyond what we can ever think or imagine.

1) Faith is a proof of your righteousness: - *Jam.2:23, Gal.2:21, Heb.11:33, Rom.1:17, Heb.10:38*

Shockingly, righteousness does not come by keeping the law. If righteousness were to be earned by keeping the law, then there would be absolutely no need to become a Christian because we have many pagans and unbelievers, many muslims and even moralists who have chosen not to kill, lie, steal, covet, etc. how would we classify such persons then? Wouldn't their keeping of the law earn them righteousness?

If you fast, don't the muslims fast also? Yes, you pray, but the muslims pray also and even observe praying hours which many Christians cannot match. *If those religious deeds and acts could gain any man a place in heaven, why then do you think the muslims and others like them will miss out of eternity with Christ.*

It is faith that justifies before God. *Remember Moses and the devil standing against him (Jude 9) and Joshua, the High Priest and Satan accusing him (Zech.3: 1-5).* The Lord will bring to remembrance the day you trusted him even though things went bad, those times you kept hoping when you had no child for years. He will bring to remembrance also days He gave you instructions to leave a place and told you to trust Him and you went to another place – all of these will be brought to remembrance before God.

2) Faith proves that your diligence - Heb.11:6b, 2 Tim.4:9

Faith is a proof or evidence to God that you are part of those seeking Him diligently. And the truth is that God looks for people in every dispensation who are seeking Him diligently so that in due time, He will reward them

3) Faith requires patience - Heb.6:12

We said earlier that faith requires patience, especially if it does not deal with instantaneous healings, miracles, etc but rather deals with God's promises and you need to wait and watch it come to pass. Therefore, "**patience** is the time frame between the time you first believed and the time you got what you asked for in prayer.

4) Faith is a sign of victory - 1 Jn.5:4b,5, Heb.11:33

You overcome through faith. You are untouchable, and if anything happens, it is certain (and the enemy knows too but only blabs) that you've got the victory. At this point, the wicked one is just a toothless lion. The powers of darkness or the wicked ones cannot just overcome you.

5) Faith is proven by faithful activities - Jam.3:17,18,20-22

Often times, we read that scripture out of context that... "**faith without work is dead**", therefore I must work before hunger kills me. Well, what that scripture is actually saying is that "**faith without faithful activities is dead**". For Instance, *God told you to resign your job and wait at home or start frying bean-cake, but because of your income and the fear of tomorrow or even the fear of how to start, you neglect that faithful activity. Then what it means is that you do not have faith, your faith is dead and meaningless.* Now then, you must know that all faith is proven by faithful activities.

6) Faith is a shield - Eph.6:16, Rom.10:17

Your faith can serve as a shield against every dirt of the wicked ones. Whenever you hear a negative pronouncement or curse against you, shield yourself with faith. *Has someone said you will die untimely? Remember that it is written that, "Thou shall not die but live..."*

7) Faith is a key to unlocking promises - *Heb.11:33*

The early saints could unlock the promises of God through faith. They waited patiently through faith until the promises were unlocked. Some of them could not even get those promises in their lifetime, yet they believed. Has God promised you something and you are already wavering over it? Don't let go of it and don't be discouraged because the time to unlock the promises are nearer than before.

8) Faith helps you to escape arrows - *Heb.11:34*

Most times when the Lord tells us something and perhaps asks us to wait for the fulfillment of the promise, while waiting in God's presence, we tend to escape evil and satanic arrows shot at us unknowingly.

9) Faith automatically earns you good report and makes you uncondemnable - *Heb.11:1,2,39, 2 Pet.2:11*

Again, faith earns us good report before God and His angels, before men and even before demons – so that it will be easy to be justified by God through faith and be counted among the just who lived by faith. So, those who live their lives full of faith while on earth will not be condemned in the end by God or anyone at all. (**2 Pet.2:11**)

10) Faith makes you strong - *Heb.11:34b*

Did you just read what faith can make of a man? One who is known to be weak and timid person who is a coward who cannot stand before men for fear can now become strong and bold, suddenly growing courage and even ready to die in the face of terror.

11) Faith pleases God - *Jam.2:23b, Heb.11:6a, - 1 Sam.16:1, Jonah 1:3*

Faith helps you to please God. How? Imagine the Lord telling you to do something and you disobey Him. Then, how can you please Him? Our obedience don't just please God but makes us God's friends or right hand men He can freely confide in, because He knows we will do whatever He wants.

12) Faith grasps eternity - *1 Tim.6:12*

The essence of all the teachings of the Bible is for us to lay hold on eternity. So, beloved, don't end up half way but ensure that you do not deny the faith until you see Christ in person.

13) You are sanctified and justified by faith - *Acts 26:18b, Gal.3:8*

Amazing, a man's faith can sanctify him. The power of faith to a believer is so enormous and beyond what we could imagine.

III. Exercising Diversities Of Faith - Mk.9:23, 16:17-18, 2 Tim.3:15, 1 Jn.5:1, Eph.2:8,9, 4:5, 10 – 13

There is more to this sub-topic than what we may discuss here, but for grouping sake, let us consider the following divisions:

- 1. Exercising The Saving Faith**
- 2. Exercising The Gospel Faith**
- 3. Exercising The Serving Faith**
- 4. Exercising The Praying Faith**
- 5. Exercising and Activating One's Faith**

1. Exercising The Saving Faith - Eph.2:8,9, Acts 10:39, 43, 2 Tim.3:15, 1 Jn.5:1, Jn.3:16, 36, 5:24, 6:40, 11:25, 26, 12:46, Rom.10:9, 1 Cor.1:21

Facts About The Saving Faith:

- a. It comes by listening to the Holy Scriptures – **2 Tim.3:15**
- b. No one merits it, salvation comes by grace – **Eph.2:8,9**
- c. Salvation itself is a form of faith. But the fact that you are saved does not mean that you are exercising other the forms of faith.
- d. At this point of faith, God becomes our Father – **Jn.2:23**
- e. This faith comes by confession with one's mouth and believing in the heart – **Rom.10:10**
- f. This faith makes us “sons of God” – **Jn.1: 12; 1 Jn.5:1**
- g. When you have this faith, you escape damnation – **Jn.3:16**
- h. With the saving faith, you move from darkness into light – **Jn.12:46**
- i. With the saving faith, you have the hope of resurrection – **Jn.11:25, 26**

Finally, this point at which you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sin and that He is the Son of God is only a **part** of several other forms of faith.

All the disciples had this kind of faith, that was why they followed Jesus in the first place, yet Jesus told them again that if they have little faith like a mustard seed, they will do a lot in the kingdom (Matt.17:20).

2. Exercising The Gospel Faith - Jam.1:22, Heb.4:2, Matt.4:4, Lk.18:8, 22, Matt.19:21, 24:35

This kind of faith in simple word is “having faith on the word of God”. Not just in the written word of God, but also every spoken word of God. It is on this kind of faith that God want us to build our lives.

Don't just believe in the Son of God, but how can the sick be healed or a short leg grow? All these things are part of the gospel truth. We must therefore believe the entire word of God. A man can be a Christian but still finds it difficult to believe some parts of the scripture he reads.

For us to function properly as Christians, we all need the Gospel Faith. When a man has this faith, he automatically becomes a **“DOER”** of the word and not just hearer alone. *Imagine a born again Christian who though listens to a thousand times on tithing or giving money to those in need. If he lacks the gospel faith, he will never give. In fact, he will tell you that “my money is mine” (Matt.19:21).*

So, a lot of people who have only the “saving faith” in our generation are stumbling at the **“Gospel Faith”**. This was one of the kind of faith Jesus was talking about when He asked if He will meet faith on earth when He returns. **(Lk.18:8)**. Surely there will be Christians on earth then, but the truth is that many of such Christians do not actively believe and practice the word of God.

3. Exercising The Serving Faith - Rom.12:3, 4-5, 6-8, 1 Pet.4:10,11, Eph.4:11-13, 1 Cor.12:27 – 31, Matt.24:45-47

The Scripture makes us realize that God in His wisdom has fashioned all of us as one body in Christ, and has programmed us to serve one another in our own respective areas **(1 Cor.12:27-31)**. God gave us several gifts to help and serve one another. These services are according to our measures of faith (gifts) given to us – **Rom.12:3**.

If you are gifted in teaching children, do it with faith hoping that someday those children will be established in Christ. Whatever “service of faith” we offer, let us know that we will all be rewarded for it. *So, one can be saved or experience the saving faith but just sit down there in church without serving others (Heb.10:25).*

4. Exercising The Praying Faith - Mk.11:24, Jam.5:15, Heb.10:22, Matt.21:22

There are prayers and there are prayers. No matter how much or how long you pray, if your prayer is not mixed with faith, you may have no answer to your prayers.

A lot of Christians pray but never receive answers to their prayers because lack of faith. A lot of people move from one prayer house to the other and yet without answers to their prayers. The problem is not that they don’t pray, but that they do not believe in their prayers. They simply lack **the praying faith**.

Whenever you come to the house of prayer (the church) or you pray in your closet, believe that everything you ask for in prayer is already yours. Don’t just pray and sweat and still be nursing doubts and fears. ***Put your faith to work in the place of prayer.***

5. Exercising and Activating One's Faith - Mk.6:5-6, 9:23, Matt.9:29, Hab.2:4b

Your faith matters a lot. In fact, your faith limits your ability. It is not that God cannot do that thing, but your faith may be limiting you **(Mk.5:6; 9: 23)**.

Mark 9:23 says... "all things are possible only to those who believe" (that they are possible). *Imagine if two people are together and one believe while the other does not. Right there and then, before their eyes, the one who believe will get healed while the other will not. Things happen to you according to the speed and level of your faith.*

Note: Remember that faith could take some time to manifest. Faith then requires patience. *Remember that it took Abraham time before his wife Sarah could conceive. So, even if you haven't seen the result yet, never give up please.*

Since we said "all things are possible", some would ask, "Can I faith everything?" (**1Tim.5:23**). *Imagine a pregnant woman who wants to deliver her baby, remove the placenta and cut the umbilical cord all by herself without any assistance or visiting the hospital. Of course, such a miracle is possible if she is all by herself isolated from everybody in a jungle but not where she has people and hospitals that could help around her. Such reckless faith is tantamount to tempting God! Faith can also come in when the doctors and midwives have tried their best to no avail or where a woman has a still birth. Faith in God at such times can bring the child back to life again!*

If you are sick, it is advisable you visit a hospital for check up to know what is wrong and possible treatment. But if after diagnosis and treatment and yet there are no changes or the drugs prescribed and taken are not working, then let your faith step in as you pray and ask God for divine intervention and healing. Faith also comes in if you have been sick for a long time and it is wasting your energy, time and money.