

THE PURSUIT OF BIBLICAL FAITH

LEARNING TO DEVELOP BIBLICAL STRATEGIES
FOR GROWING OUR FAITH
IN GOD AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST
ON A DAILY BASIS

HOW IMPORTANT IS FAITH?

- 1) **“But without faith *it is impossible to please him [God]*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”** (Heb 11:6)
 - In Amos 5:25 and Acts 7:42 we are told that God took no notice of the children of Israel’s offering for 40 years in the wilderness. Why?? Hebrews 4:2 suggests that the element of faith was missing.
 - Zechariah 7:5 tells us that God took no notice of the Jews ritual fastings for 70 years because it was not done in humility which is the basis developing faith.
- 2) **We cannot demonstrate Godly love without having faith first.** “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.” (1Co 13:13) The order is critical: Godly love is born out of faith.
- 3) **We cannot be saved by God’s grace unless we have faith.** Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”
 - Four times in two verses Paul reiterates that while our job is to believe, salvation is the gift of God.
- 4) The Scriptures “are able to make us wise unto salvation **through faith** which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 3:15)
- 5) **“The just shall live by faith.”** (Hab. 2:4, Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, Heb. 10:38)
- 6) **We are brought in to the Hope of Israel by faith.** The process of grafting the Gentiles in to the Hope of Israel was the by “purifying their hearts through faith” and corroborating this by giving them the Holy Spirit. (Acts 15:9)
- 7) **Faith availeth much...and it works by love:** “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” (Gal 5:6 cp. Rom.2:29 + Deut 30:6)
- 8) **Faith is an integral part of the atonement.** We must have faith in Christ’s blood to be justified freely by God’s grace and find redemption. (Faith x 7 in Romans 3:23-31)
- 9) **What are the weightier matters of the Law?** Judgment, mercy **and Faith**. Matt 23:23, Micah 6:8
- 10) **What is the victory that overcomes the world? Our faith.** 1 John 5:4-5
- 11) **The Gospel of John was written that we might have faith.** “But these are written, that ye might **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:31)
- 12) **Faith is integral to our obedience.** “the obedience to the faith...” translated “the obedience OF faith...” (ESV, RV, YTL, Diaglott...etc.) (Romans 1:5 & 16:26)

- 13) **If we act against what we believe/have faith in, even of matters of conscience, we sin.** “And he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.” (Rom. 14:23)
- 14) **What we believe, regardless of what we profess, has a massive impact on our reality.** “For as [a man] thinks in his heart, so *is* he.” (Pro. 23:7)

WHAT IS FAITH?

- 1) **Biblically Defined:** “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- Your thoughts...which have substance
 - Your connection to God and the Lord Jesus Christ & what they’ve said
 - Your belief
 - Your trust
 - Metaphorically, your signal strength/connection to God & the Lord Jesus Christ
- 2) **Faith to move mountains?** Literally? (Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23)
- Zech 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.
- 3) **Where does it find root and grow?**
- The heart (Romans 10:6 & 8, 1 Tim. 1:5, 2 Tim. 2:22, Hebrews 10:22)
 - The inner man (Eph. 3:16, Romans 2:29, 7:22, 2 Cor. 4:16, 1 Peter 3:4)
 - Your thoughts (Phil 4:8, 2 Cor. 10:5)
- 4) **But there’s a problem with the human heart.** (Jer. 17:9, Matt 15:19, Mark 7: 21, Heb 3:12, James 1:14-15)
- This implies that there is a battle for faith to dwell in the human heart. (Gal 5:17)

WHAT LIMITS OUR FAITH?

Wrong Thinking

- 1) **Fear—in all its forms except Godly fear/reverence.**
- **Christ came to deliver us from fear of death.** “...and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Heb 2:15)
 - “There is no fear in love; but **perfect love casts out fear**, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (1Jn 4:18)
 - “For **you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear**, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” (Rom 8:15)
 - For **God has not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2Ti 1:7)
 - Numerous other passages (Deut. 31:6, Joshua 1:6,9, 18 etc. + Luke 1:74)

- 2) **Believing untruths or lies, SIN + thus the hardening of our hearts**
 - "But My people would not heed My voice, And Israel would *have* none of Me. So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, To walk in their own counsels." (Psa 81:11-12)
 - "And [that they] may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation *that* did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to God." (Psa 78:8)
 - Gen 3:4, 1 Thess 2:11, Isa. 6:9 + John 12:39
- 3) **Lack of perception/awareness**
 - Matthew 6:22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.
 - 2 Tim 4:18, Heb 12:22 , 2 Peter 1:11
- 4) **Pride/arrogance/self-will**
 - Prov. 16:18, Dan 4:30-37, Rom 11:20
- 5) **Misunderstanding of Scripture/Providence**
 - Ecc 9:11, book of Job, 2 Peter 1:7
- 6) **Faith in the wrong things**
 - Isa. 59:1, Gen 18:4, Jer. 32:17, John 6:5, Heb 7:25
- 7) **Sin/Wounding your conscience**
 - 1 Cor. 8:7, 1 Tim 1:5, 19, antidote = Hebrews 9:9
- 8) **Being too capable/Leaning unto one's own "strength"**
 - **1 Cor. 1:20, 1 Cor. 3:19**
 - "So he answered and said to me: "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts." (Zech 4:6)
 - "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths." (Pro 3:5-6)
- 9) **Not clearly understanding what God thinks of you** (both *before* making a covenant with Him in baptism and *after*) Not understanding that God is the Initiator of Our Salvation
 - Before Baptism:**
 - "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (45) That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for ***he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.***" (Mat 5:44-45)
 - ***God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked*** (Ezk. 33:11 + 18:32)
 - God hears unbaptized Cornelius' prayer (Acts 10:1-7)
 - "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom 5:6
 - God **is calling** out a people for His Name (Acts 15:14)
 - "For **many are called**, but few *are* chosen." (Mat 22:14)
 - After Baptism:**
 - *See section "What God Thinks of You Once You're Baptised"
- 10) **Looking at self**
 - Matt 14:22-26, Mark 6: 45-56, John 6:16-24

11) **The cares of this life have overwhelmed you**

- Mark 4:19, Luke 12:17-21, Lk 14:18-20, Lk 21:34, 2 Tim 4:10, Ecc. 5:10-16, 1 Jn 2:15-17

12) **Not understanding your purpose/destiny in life**

- 1 Sam. 1:11, Luke 2:49 John 12:27, 18:37

13) **The adversary**—which is not an external tempter but our own thinking which refuses to believe what God says about us...which thus calls God a liar...makes an false accusation against Him and slanders Him.

- Luke 8:12, Matt. 13:19, Mark 4:15,

WHAT GOD THINKS OF YOU ONCE YOU'RE BAPTIZED

God is calling out a people for HIS name.

- “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.” (Acts 15:14)

You are Saints... or “sacred”

- Majority of the letters open with “to the saints...” (1 Corinthians Romans, 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians...etc.)
- 1 Cor 1:1 Paul, called [*to be*] an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, (2) Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, **called [*to be*] saints**, with **all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours:
- “Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of **his saints**.” (Psa 116:15)

Fellowcitizens & a Habitation of God through the Spirit

- “**Now** therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but **fellowcitizens with the saints**, and of the **household of God**; (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto **an holy temple in the Lord**: (22) In whom ye also are builded together for **an habitation of God through the Spirit**. Eph 2:19-22

Servants of Righteousness

- “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” (**Rom 6:18**)

Not Servants, but Friends

- Henceforth **I call you not servants**; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but **I have called you friends**; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (Joh 15:15)
- “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (Joh 15:14)

Christ's Brethren & Children

- “For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (11) For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them **brethren**, (12) Saying, I will declare thy name unto **my brethren**, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (13) And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and **the children which God hath given me**.” (Heb 2:10-13)

We are Sons/Daughters of God and thus Heirs according to the Promise

- “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive **the adoption of sons**. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, **Father**. (7) Wherefore **thou art no more a servant, but a son**; and if a son, then **an heir** of God through Christ.” (Gal 4:4-7)
- “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: (John says) it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know this, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him;” (1 Jn 3:1-2)
- “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and **heirs** according to the promise.” Gal 3:26-29
- “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to **become the sons of God**, *even* to them that believe on his name:” **John 1:12**

The Children of Light

- “Ye are all **the children of light**, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness (1Thess. 5:5)

God has the Utmost Care for You

- “But even the very hairs of **your** head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. (Luke 12:7+Matthew 10:30)

Predestination/concept of “I knew you before you were in the womb”

- “According as **he hath chosen us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. (Eph 1:4-6)
- “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestinated** according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.” (Eph 1:11-12)

God has Chosen YOU

- “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath **from the beginning chosen YOU** to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:” (2 Thess. 2:13)

You are the Elect of God

- “Put on therefore, as **the elect of God**, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;” (Col 3:12)
- “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom **he did foreknow**, he also did **predestinate to be** conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did **predestinate**, them he also **called**: and whom he called, them **he also justified**: and whom he justified, **them he also glorified**.” + “What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?” Rom 8:28-31
 - A clearer translation indicates: “**God Works** All Things Together For good...”

No condemnation...

- “There is therefore now **no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Romans 8:1 + 14, 16, 23, 32)
- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth** in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (18) **He that believeth on him is not condemned**: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16-18)

God’s Intention is to Save You

- “Wherefore **he is able also to save them to the uttermost** that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Heb 7:25)
- “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to **present you faultless** before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude v24-25 Compare Rev. 14:1-5)

You During the Judgment of this World

- “Come, **my people**, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. (21) For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place **to punish the inhabitants of the earth** for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” Isa 26:20

It is Your Father’s Good Pleasure to Give You the Kingdom

- “Fear not, little flock; for **it is your Father's good pleasure** to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32
- “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye **blessed of my Father**, inherit the kingdom **prepared for you** from the foundation of the world:” (Mat 25:34)

You Have Eternal Life!

- “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that **ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 Jn 5:13)
 - The order is important here.

Your Names are Written in the Book of Life/Written in Heaven

- “And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow-labourers, whose names *are* in the book of life (Php. 4:3 + Rev. 3:5)
- “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:20)

You are the Temple of God

- “Know ye not that **ye are the temple of God**, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor 3:16)
- “What? know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1Cor 6:19)
- “In whom ye also are builded together for **an habitation of God through the Spirit**. (Eph 2:22)

God Has Given Us All Things

- “**He that spared not his own Son**, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also **freely give us all things?**” (Rom 8:32)
- “And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and **all that I have is thine.**” (Luke 15:31)
- “For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: **no good thing will he withhold** from them that walk uprightly.” (Psa 84:11)
- “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know **the things that are freely given to us** of God.” (1Co 2:12)
- “For **all things are for your sakes**, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. (2 Cor 4:15)

ALMOST EVERY ONE OF THOSE VERSES COME WITH A WARNING...

- Which can be summed up in: “Our liberty in Christ cannot breed license to live ungodly lives.”
- The point of God telling us over and over again our status in Christ Jesus, is to inspire us and to build our faith in Him...not to allow us to run amok.
- We are not Calvinist who believe once you’re saved, you’re *always* saved regardless of your manner of your life, what it is your believe, and your works.

Can we lose the Kingdom? Absolutely we can. How? We invert the Truth. We stop believing.

Behaviors that indicate unbelief.

- “Know ye not that the **unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1Co 6:9-10)
- “Now **the works of the flesh** are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** (Gal 5:19-21)
- “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; (19) Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:” (1Ti 1:18-19)
- Read Letter to Jude about those turning away from “the faith” v.3 and “having faith” v.5
- Yet a positive contrast in Jude “But ye, beloved, **building up yourselves on your most holy faith**, praying in the Holy Spirit, (21) Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 1:20-21)

HOW DOES GOD GENERATE/INCREASE OUR FAITH?

1) God has given His only Son for the forgiveness of sins

- John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- Mat 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Both Ephesians and Colossians begin the same way, emphasizing the forgiveness of sins. How? By the blood of Christ.

- Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;
- Col 1:14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:
- “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Rom 8:32

2) **Reassures us by speaking to us through His Word**

- Rom 10:17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
- **Heb 1:1** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3) **God uses logic to convince us**

- 1Cor. 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.
- Paul’s arguments are logical.
- God is wise and shows us the process of how He is saving us

4) **God promises to work in us:**

- Php 2:12-13 work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...For it ***is God*** which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.
- **Isa 55:11** So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.
- **Php 1:6** Being confident of this very thing, that **He** which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

5) **God is faithful**

- 1Co 1:9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.
- **Mal 3:6** For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

6) **He will never leave us, nor forsake us**

- God said it to Moses who said it to the nation of Israel. Moses said it specifically to Joshua. The LORD also said it to Joshua (because he needed to hear it again...as we all do) David said it to Solomon “God will not fail thee nor forsake thee...(and Solomon told it to the

people. In Jeremiah it was said this way: "I am with you to save you and deliver you. And in Haggai reminds the people "Yahweh of Armies is with you..."

- Nehemiah reminded God of it in prayer...and Paul passed it on to the Hebrews in chapter 13...and Christ's said it directly to all of his disciples including us in Matthew 28:20, "I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen. Those are his last words in the Gospel of Matthew...
- And yet we talk of the absent Lord. And we don't believe that God is in EVERYTHING. Revelation tells us that he walks in the midst of the lampstands and we say...our absent Lord. True the Kingdom hasn't been establish at this point in time, but the King is in our midst. How? **By faith.**
- References: Matt 28:20, Deu 31:6; Jos 1:5; 1Ki 8:57; 1Chr 28:20; Neh 9:31; Heb 13:5; Jer 42:11, Hag 1:13, 2:4, Rev. 2:1

7) He puts us through severe suffering to grow our faith

- **1Pe 1:7** That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.
- **Joh 15:1** I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
- **Act 14:22** Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.
- **Jeremiah in the pit, David in Psalm 40, overcoming suffering by the strength of God is a characteristic of everyone who enters the Kingdom of God...the blood of Abel speaks...**
 - **Rev 6:9** And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:
 - Rev 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
 - **Rom 8:36** As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
- Not a test in the sense that God stands aloof from us, unwilling to help! This is not a test like in school where the teacher does not help the student who is taking the exam.
- God wants to help us through the challenge. God is for us, who can be against us? Rom. 8:31

8) He's with us in the suffering

- Dan 3:25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

9) He tells us what to have faith in and gives us examples

- Gal. 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
- Col. 1:4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,
- Examples?? Hebrews 11...all throughout Scripture.

10) He remembers us

- Psa 56:8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?
- **Nehemiah 3 times asks God to remember him** Neh. 13:14, 22, 31 **Remember me**, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.
- Apple of God's eye: Deu 32:10; Psa 17:8; Zec 2:8

11) God has made promises and cannot lie

- **Gen 12:1-3**
- Gen 15:4 And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.
Gen 15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.
Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.
- Gal 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that **we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith**.
- Gal 3:29 And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs **according to the promise**.
- 2Pe 1:3, Titus 1:1-2 (God cannot lie)

15) God reorganizes our thinking when it goes astray by reestablishing our relationship to him. The root of this is magnifying God and thus the humbling of man.

WAYS WE CAN INCREASE OUR FAITH

1) Humility (the Number 1 Thing!)

- Increase our Faith! **Luk 17:5** And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.
 - Mustard seed & Unprofitable servant
- John the Baptist—**Joh 3:30** He must increase, but I *must* decrease.
- Become as a little child: Mat 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- Concept of Humility:** Mat 23:11-12; Psa 131:1-2; Isa 57:15; Luk 14:11; 1Pet 5:5; Jam 4:10, Luk 9:48
- Prayer and Fasting
 - Mat 17:21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.
 - Mark 9:29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.
 - Isaiah 58—the intention behind true fasting
- The Basis of “great faith” = humility
 - Mat 8:9-10 “For **I am a man under authority**, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them

that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found **so great faith**, no, not in Israel. (Luk 7:9)

- ii. Mat 15:27-28 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet **the dogs** eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, **great is thy faith**: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

2) Be good parents—live by faith (modeling)

- a. The selection of Mary as the Mother of Christ: Luk 1:28
 - i. Hannah
- b. Give your children a Biblical vocabulary
- c. Teach them the stories
- d. How to read the Bible—what to look for (moral implications /lessons/ principles/ repetition/how to ask questions)
- e. Teach them how to listen for Bible Echoes (Sheep hear his voice + Get knowledge)
- f. Teach them Bible songs—to keep the Word of God in their hearts
- g. Memorise parts of Scripture
- h. Allow them to fail—and be there to help pick up the pieces in love when they do

3) Get into God's Word

- a. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17)
- b. Proverbs 4:7 Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

4) Go to places where faith is found

- a. **Luke 2:51** And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. Luk 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

HOW?

- b. **Luke 2:49** And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
- c. **Pro 1:5** A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:
- d. Despite the hypocrisy prevalent in the Temple
- e. Go to the Ecclesia, you won't find it outside—where people don't respect/honor God.

5) Remember the past of how God has been present and active in your life.

- a) Mark 8:18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?
- b) John 16:4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may **remember that I told you of them**. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.
- c) **Remember the Exodus...the memorial feasts...the remembrance of Christ week by week—WHY?** To get us to reflect on what God has done, is willing to do, and will do in us.

6) How Did David grow faith?

- Psa 16:8 I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Cp Acts 2

7) Be still and see the salvation of God

- a. Exodus. 14:13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

- b. Job 37:14 Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.
- c. Psa 46:10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
- d. Mar 4:39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

8) The Jonathon and his armor-bearer principle. Putting yourself in situations in which it is required for God to “show up” for there to be success:

1Sa 14:6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for *there is* no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few. 1Sa 14:7 And his armourbearer said unto him, Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I *am* with thee according to thy heart. 1Sa 14:8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto *these* men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. 1Sa 14:9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. 1Sa 14:10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this *shall be* a sign unto us.

- a) **Why this isn't tempting God...**this is not requiring a sign so that they can have faith. Contrast: John 6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, ***that we may see, and believe thee?*** what dost thou work?
 - o Jonathon & his armor-bearer have faith and this is a step in the process of growing and extended it. The seed of faith is there.
- b) **Gideon**—God doesn't get upset with him! Faith often needs strengthening. Judges 6:39
- c) **Faith can inspire faith in others...**Jonathon was willing to risk his life believing that God was with him. The armourbearer followed suit.
- d) **While the faith of others can inspire others—it certainly cannot replace or enen sustain others personal faith. Eze 14:14** Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but* their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

9) The Elisha principle—Believe that God is in, or permits, things into the lives of His family for the growth and development of their faith.

- a. **2Ki 6:16** And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. 2Ki 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.
- b. **Is God in Everything in the sense that He permits things?**

10) Control Your Thoughts with Biblical Inputs

- Make your thoughts subject to God's Word (the Sword of the Spirit)
- Meditation/Sing Perfect peace
- Program your brain daily through the readings—“let these sayings sink down into your ears”. **Your subconscious mind** demonstrates what it is you ***actually*** believe and what you do not believe, regardless of what you profess. The acceptable disciple has the Word of God so ingrained, so woven into the fabric of their character that “the right hand doesn't know what the left is doing...” When you didn't even realize that you gave someone “a cool cup of water in the name of Christ”. ***That's*** your subconscious mind transformed. But that takes prayer, time and effort and faith.
- Guard your heart against lies—slay them by the sword of the Spirit immediately
- Develop a forceful NO against wrong thinking/lies/untruths. Give lies no soil to take root in.

11) Become Aware of What's Impossible For You

- John 6:5-7 he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?...Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.
- 2 Co 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.
- **HOW?** Psa 19:12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

12) Be Instant in Prayer

- a. Rom 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;
- b. Neh 2:4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? **So I prayed to the God of heaven.** (5) And I said unto the king..."
- c. Brother Harry Tennant praying three times during another Brother's Bible talk

13) Listen for God's voice—His "still small voice" in the mundane things of life

- a. Sheep hear his voice: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (John 10:27)
- b. "And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." (1Kings 19:12)

14) "What might we do to work the works of God?" Know the answer to this question from John 6:28:

- It's important to know that this is our job (believing) and it is the work of God in us.

15) Understand what is little faith

- Matt 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Luke 12:28

16) Understand the role of Faith in Christ's healing and the role of Him forgiving sins

- Matthew 9:29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, **According to your faith be it unto you.**

17) Understand how conscience is affected by faith

1 Tim 1:5, 1 Tim 1:19 1Tim 3:9

18) Understand that faith grows incrementally:

- God didn't ask Abraham to offer Isaac as the first step in the development of His faith

19) Aim to be full of faith

- Stephan (Acts 6:5, 8) and others...
- Be full of faith (or faithful) in the little things of life...so that you will be faithful in the big things of life. Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (+Luke 19:17) (see 14)
- Even if we are "full of faith" that does not mean that there is a "happy ending" in this age. Examples, Stephen, John Baptist, Jesus Christ, Paul, Peter etc...but God can raise the dead.

20) Don't invert the order of faith and works

- Don't believe that pseudo "good works" which are not rooted in faith/love of God will generate faith—as really they lead to making oneself happy instead of God being well pleased.
- **Jas 2:20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21) Know the reward

- Heb. 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that he is a rewarder* of them that diligently seek him.
- Gen_15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward. (2) And Abram said, Lord GOD, ***what wilt thou give me***, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus
- Mat 19:27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?
- Col_3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.
- Matt 10:42; 16:27, 1Cor. 3:14, Rev 22:12

22) Cast your cares

- 1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you

23) Study the portrait of the faithful man—Christ. Faithful men/women in Scripture. In the Ecclesia.

24) Study prophecy (God's Words)

- 2Peter 1:19-21, Rev. 22:7

25) Submit to God...defer to God. Make the altar of prayer before going down into Egypt, as well as after.

- Luke 22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless **not my will, but thine, be done**.
- Gen. 12:8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD
- Gen. 13:4, Gen 13:18, all the way to Gen 22:9

26) Re-learn what God says about your future and do works in harmony with your destiny/purpose. Christ knew his purpose/destiny

- John 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
- John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.
- John 16:10, 16

27) Understand WHY what's happening to you is happening to you.

- 1 Pe 1:7 That the trial of **your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

28) Do not allow this lie into your life: that your situation hasn't changed because you simply haven't developed the faith necessary to alleviate the pains of life.

- The danger of "faith healing" vs. God's will—we have to accept God's wisdom decrees things we often don't initially understand; and some things we won't understand until the Kingdom.

29) Realize the power of what you believe—regardless of what that actually is, has an extraordinary ability to transform your current reality. While the details may not change immediately, your response to it will.

30) Realize that Christ is not absent/God is with us

- Rev. 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;
- Matt. 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.
- John 8:16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.
- John 16:32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

31) Be careful of how you talk about things, how you frame things. This impacts our thinking.

- James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.