

STUDY ELEVEN – STAY IN THE FLOW OF GOD’S LOVE!

Introduction

As we have been working our way through this Activating Faith series, we’ve shared with you some valuable principles of faith. You should have learnt that faith gives God an opening, and we’ve shared that faith must be spoken – all the time. Today, we will share another core principle about faith: Faith works by love- that is – faith forgives.

Returning to Jesus’ teaching on faith in Mark 11, let’s read what He told His disciples right after He told them they could speak to a mountain in faith and have whatever they said.

“Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.” (Mark 11:24-25).

I understand that when we’ve been hurt and the Holy Spirit reminds us of this verse, our flesh wants to say, “Yes, but, LORD, You heard the terrible things those people said about me...” “Yes, but, Lord, You know how that person abused me...” etc.

While the hurt we suffered may have been a cruel and ungodly act against us, nonetheless, we have to walk in love with those people. After all, God had to forgive. Jesus had to forgive. You and I are no different. We must forgive if we want to walk in faith and in the full favour of God.

Besides, if someone is against you, why do them a favour? Why let them ruin the rest of your life by short-circuiting your faith through unforgiveness?

Don’t let anyone keep you sick, broke, mentally tormented and without joy because of unforgiveness. Don’t help other people close the door to God’s blessings in your life and open the door to every curse loosed in this world. No, forgive them. Stay in the flow of God’s love.

Faith and Love

Galatians 5:6 AMPC says, *“For [if we are] in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love.”*

Faith works by love. It is energized by love. Faith is put into motion by love. Why is that?

Well, most of us are probably familiar with the Apostle Paul’s teaching on love in 1 Corinthians 13. But as we read verses 1-3 in The Amplified Bible, I want us to focus on the connection between faith and love.

“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love [for others growing out of God’s love for me], then I have become only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal [just an annoying distraction]. And if I have the gift of prophecy [and speak a new message from God to the people], and understand all mysteries, and [possess] all knowledge; and if I have all [sufficient] faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love [reaching out to others], I am nothing. If I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it does me no good at all.”

In the Garden of Eden, God gave Adam just one “do not.” It was do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God only gave one command, but it certainly covered a lot of territory.

Today, if you think about it, you and I still only have one “do not” – Do not get out of love. That’s our one commandment. We are to walk in love, which covers a lot of ground, too. In fact, we see in this passage

ACTIVATING FAITH!

that our love walk is connected to everything we do in life as believers, including our faith. Paul makes it quite clear that faith – without love – is going nowhere.

Again, we have to ask ourselves: How is it that our faith is so tied into love? Let’s read a little further into 1 Corinthians 13 and we’ll find out:

Love bears up under anything and everything that comes... its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening]. Love never fails – never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end... (verses 7-8, AMP).

God wants us to walk in love because love never fails. He wants the best for us, and since the best is found in love, you and I must walk in love in order to receive God’s best. That’s why Jesus instructed His disciples to forgive when they prayed.

When you and I stand before God in prayer, in a position of faith, we must forgive anyone who has wronged us if we want answers to our prayers. Otherwise, not only do we slam the door shut on the favour of God, but we also give place to what we read about in James 3:16 – “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”

In other words, unforgiveness leads to strife, and strife to every evil work of the devil. When that happens, all the Bible reading in the world won’t change the situation. Only forgiveness will.

Centred Around Love

You and I cannot pick and choose what we want to believe from God’s WORD and disregard the rest. It’s all connected, and it all centres around love.

What’s more, as long as we’re on this earth, we will have plenty of opportunities to forgive people – taking no account of evil done to us, paying no attention to “suffered wrongs” (1 Corinthians 13:5, AMP).

Remember, faith without action is dead. “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead, also” (James 2:26). If we don’t act on The WORD of God and forgive, we will never walk in the full measure of God’s favour. In fact, we won’t even get close.

So don’t take offense. Don’t carry around hurts. Release them to the same blood of Jesus which cleansed you, redeemed you and set you free. Stay in the flow of God’s love. As you do, you will free yourself to walk in faith...and in the full measure of God’s favour!

Questions

Why is forgiveness so important?

How does forgiveness free you?

Who do you need to forgive today?

What other lessons have you taken from this study?
