

STUDY FIFTEEN – STRETCH YOUR FAITH!

Introduction

“Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he’s there, in the place of honour, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he ploughed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!” (Hebrews 12:1-3 MSG)

There’s never been a greater time to stretch our faith. Right now, in these end times, we have a greater opportunity to live victoriously on this earth than any other generation since Jesus was resurrected and seated at the right hand of glory.

As you’re studying through this “Activating Faith” series and building your faith with the WORD, begin to put a demand on it. Exercise it regularly to enlarge its capacity to overcome every challenge and receive bigger and greater things from The Word of God. You should do this on a regular basis.

Remember, it’s God’s own faith that dwells in you, and Jesus is the developer of it. It will grow if you feed and exercise it.

“... God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” (Romans 12:3)

Too often we’ve been quick to settle for “good enough” instead of God’s best. We do that with our calling, our health, our relationships – and that’s especially true where our finances are concerned.

The devil would like nothing better than to keep us bound by debt, lack, poverty and financial weakness in order to keep us under the thumb of the world’s ungodly way of doing things. He’d like nothing better than to render us impotent and without influence in worldly affairs. Not to mention cutting us short and preventing us from getting God’s WORD out to the sick and dying masses of people who need Jesus so badly!

Here we are, the generation that has been given more equipment both in technology and spiritual revelation with which to reach mankind than any other generation, and we’ve been so bogged down in debt and lack, we haven’t been doing what we should have.

Think about this: Even in our bound and bogged-down condition, the Body of Christ has still affected the whole world with the gospel of Jesus. Think about what is about to happen as more and more of God’s people are set free to give and go – by the millions. Wow!

This is why Hebrews 12:1 AMPC says: *“let us strip off and throw aside every encumbrance (unnecessary weight) and that sin which so readily (deftly and cleverly) clings to and entangles us...”* Unnecessary weights like debt, sickness, lack etc. and entangling sins which also includes succumbing to the worldly way of doing things. We are instructed to *“run with patient endurance and steady and active persistence the appointed course of the race that is set before us.”* We need to be free to run this race well hence we need to stretch our faith for this freedom.

Stretching and Pushing

Now, let me share with you what I mean by stretching and putting a demand on your faith, because this is an important principle as you're learning about faith in this "Activating Faith" series. Look at your own situation and surroundings and decide what the next step up should be. Where *should* you be in your giving? Where *should* you be in your income? How *should* your physical body feel? Where *should* you be in the call God has put on your life? What's the next step towards *what should be*?

Now, go to The WORD and believe Philippians 4:13 – you can do all things through God's Anointed One and His Anointing which strengthens you. Begin to think of yourself that way: free in Jesus, doing God's best instead of being satisfied, or worse yet, just putting up with things the way they are.

Believe me, things will either get better by faith and grow, or they'll get worse. They won't just stay the same.

Sometimes, the very mention of living debt-free sets off a storm of unbelief. I was praying about this recently, and The LORD said, when people ask, "*how would we ever build a new church without borrowing money? It's so much.*" I tell them, "*If you don't have the faith to build the church without going into debt, you will only have the faith to make the payments.*"

It takes the same faith to believe God for cash up front as it does to believe Him for 30 or 40 years of big payments, and all that interest that's going into the world's pockets. The same would be true of a home or any other project that's dedicated to God and to your welfare.

Now, that's what I mean by stretching your faith. Don't build a church or a house or whatever it is, before you spend enough time meditating on God's WORD to know in your heart you really can do all things through Jesus and His Anointing which strengthens you. During that meditation and faith-stretching time in The WORD, you will hear from God. He'll show you what to do. He'll show you when to do it. And, He will finance you.

You belong to Him. It gives Him great pleasure to prosper you, especially when you go to Him instead of the world to get your needs met. This goes for your health, relationships, calling and all other areas of your life, too.

The WORD Is Key

As always and in everything, The WORD of God is the key. It must come first. The bigger the problem or project, the more The WORD of God should be your first priority and should get all your attention – not the other way around.

Don't give your attention to the size of the challenge. Give your attention to The WORD. Whatever you are believing God for – no matter how big or problematic – will begin to lose its formidability. It will begin to shrink, you'll laugh and say, "My God meets my needs according to *His* riches in glory." That's when you're ready to go ahead with the project and win.

I can tell you The WORD works! Put it to work. Push yourself to start stretching your faith today.

Questions

In what areas have you settled for “good enough” instead of God’s best?

Examine your calling, your relationships, finances and health. Where should each of them, be today?

What should get your attention when faced with a problem or concern?

What other lessons have you taken from this study?
