

STUDY ONE – WHAT FAITH IS!

Introduction

FAITH is giving substance to things hoped for."

Faith is grasping the unrealities of hope and bringing them into the realm of reality. Faith grows out of the Word of God. It is the warranty deed that the thing for which you have fondly hoped is at last yours. It is the "evidence of things not seen."

You hope for finances to meet that obligation; faith gives assurance that you will have the money when you need it. You hope for physical strength to do the work that you know you must do. Faith says, "God is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Sense Knowledge has given to the church Mental Assent, which looks so much like faith that many people cannot see the difference. Mental Assent is seeing it, admiring it, saying "it is true, but not in my case." Mental Assent agrees that the Bible is a Revelation, that it came from God, and that every Word is true, and yet when the crisis comes it does not work. It simply recognizes the truthfulness of that wonderful Book, but it does not act upon it.

Hope says, "I will get it sometime." Faith says, "I have it now." Mental Assent says, "It is beautiful. I know I should have it. For some reason I don't get it. I cannot understand it." Sense Knowledge faith says, "When I see it, when I feel it, I will know I have it." Real faith in the Word says, "If God says it is true, it is. If He says that 'By His stripes I am healed', I am. If He says that God shall supply every need of mine, He will do it. If God says He is the strength of my life, He is.

So, I go about doing my work because He is what He says He is, and I am what He says I am." "If He says that I am strong, I am. "If He says that I am healed, I am. "If He says that He cares for me, I know that He does. "So quietly I rest on His Word, irrespective of evidence that would satisfy the Senses."

Real Faith is built on the Word. It is untarnished by Sense Knowledge. It is as unconscious of itself as is the faith of a little child in its mother.

The child never says, "Now Mother, I believe your word. I know that if I ask you for a piece of bread you will give it to me." If he said such things, it would frighten the mother. She would wonder what had happened to her child. We have built around faith a strange wordology that is like a barb-wire entanglement. You hear men and women cry "Lord, I believe. Help thou mine unbelief."

You hear them pray for faith. You hear men tell God that they know that what He says is true, that every Word He has spoken is true. All that indicates the dominion of Sense Knowledge over their spirits, that the Word has not yet gained the supremacy in their lives. Faith is the result of the Word dwelling in us. I don't mean the Word committed to memory. I mean the Word lived, practiced, until it has become a part of ourselves. We meditate in it. We think deeply in it. We feed upon it.

The Word becomes a very part of ourselves; this word of Faith builds into us confidence and assurance. Sense Knowledge will fight every step of the way to hold us in the realm of things seen, felt and heard, but we persistently drive ourselves into the Word until the Word is a part of our being, the Word is real.

EXPLORING "TYPES" OF FAITH

Faith is the greatest element in advanced civilization. As human faith gives birth to such achievements in the natural realm, so the believer's faith in the Father and His Word gives birth to spiritual achievements. The preacher who has faith in the message that he is giving, finds that the Word produces faith in the

SCHOOL OF FAITH!

hearts of the men who hear him. He has faith in the Word, that God is in it and back of it. He has faith in humanity, that it will respond to the thing he is giving. He has faith in Love, the Jesus kind of Love. He believes it is the solution of every human problem, and the family that practices love produces the highest type of Christian character. It was a great day in my own life when I discovered that God was a Faith God. I knew He was a Love God.

I knew He was a Righteous God, an Omnipotent God, an Omniscient God; when I found He was primarily a Faith God I saw that it was natural for us, as His children, to walk by faith.

Creative Faith: Hebrews 11:3 *"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."* It was a fresh, new creation . . . not a revamped creation made out of worn-out worlds. I discovered that it was ruled by Words. Heb. 1:3 *"Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high..."* There are three great words used again and again in the first chapter of Genesis. They are *"Let there be."* Faith-filled words brought the universe into being, and faith-filled words are ruling that universe today.

Jesus gave us some illustrations of creative faith. Matthew 15:30-31 records that the maimed were made whole. *"Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. So, the multitude marvelled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel."* I have known of several women who have had organs restored that surgeons had removed through operations. Creative faith is just as real today as it was when Jesus walked in Galilee.

Dominating Faith: This is faith that rules circumstances. In Hebrews 1:3 we see a picture of Jesus. *"Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high..."* Here He is not only a creator, but He also dominates what He has created. He rules the universe by the Word of His power. Here is an illustration of His dominating the forces of nature. Matt. 8:26 *"... Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."* Jesus ruled the wind and the sea. How His authority staggered those who observed it. They said, *"So the men marvelled, saying, 'Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?'"* In Luke 5:1-11 we see Him ruling the fish of the sea. He had used Peter's boat for a little while as a pulpit.

Then He paid for the use of it. He said, *"Peter did you catch anything last night?"* Peter answered, *"No, Master."* Jesus said, *"Put out into the deep and let down your nets."* Peter said, *"I know Master there are no fish here, but at Your word I will let down the nets."* The nets were filled instantly. That is dominating faith. Mark 1:32-34 *"At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him."* Jesus ruled demons and they recognized His dominion over them.

John 11:39-44 At the raising of Lazarus He was Master over death. He said, *"Roll away the stone."* Then He commanded Lazarus to come forth. Master Jesus had dominating faith. He ruled demoniacal forces. He ruled the works of the Devil. He was He commanded a tree to die, and it died from the roots up. He was absolute Monarch of the laws that govern the Universe.

Religious Faith: Few of us realize what a mighty force religious faith is today. Men have faith in Creeds, in Organizations, in their Church, in Medicine, in doctors, in Medical Science and Surgical Science, in good

SCHOOL OF FAITH!

works, kindly deeds, giving money, in repentance and penance. It is amazing the faith the average man has in something that he or someone else can do.

Faith in Experiences: Perhaps the most delusive of all the different kinds of faith is faith in Experiences. Men tell what they have felt, what they have heard or seen. Someone said to me recently, "I am not healed, I still have the pain, or faith is not working." Such people have Sense Knowledge Faith. They must have physical evidence, or they do not believe. No delusion that has grasped the modern church is more deadly than this. Some do not believe that they have received the Holy Spirit until they have had a physical manifestation.

They do not believe they are healed until the pain has left their body. They do not believe God has heard their prayer until they can see some physical evidence of it. We have seen in this type of faith that Sense Knowledge and Sense Evidence hold the place that the Word of God should hold.

In **Revelation Faith** the Word holds the first place. It is not dependent upon physical evidence. Revelation Faith believes that no Word from God is void of power, and rests in quiet confidence in what God has stated. It accepts the Word as final without any other evidence. If the Word declares it, that is enough. The sick one reads, "Surely He has borne my sicknesses and carried my diseases," and then cries, "Thank you, Father. Then I am healed."

This is New Covenant or Revelation Faith.