

Study on the Holy Spirit

Study # 10

Faith

This week's study will focus on the next gift, Faith.

- **I Cor. 12:9a** *To another faith by the same Spirit*

Faith, what a simple word that has so much power.

Faith can move mountains, or faith can make the doubting believe.

Faith can cause a tree to wither away; faith can open the eyes of the blind.

Faith can draw people closer together, or can heal a broken home.

So what is this little five-letter word that can do so many things?

Here is the definition of Faith from the bible dictionary:

Greek Word: *pistis*

Primarily, "firm persuasion," a conviction based upon hearing, is used in the New Testament always of "faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual."

Here is the definition from a dictionary:

1. Complete trust or confidence.
2. Unquestioning, religious, belief.

Here is the definition from the bible:

- **Heb 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
- **Heb 11:1(NIV)** *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*
- **Heb 11:1(Living)** *What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead.*

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then you have used faith.

- **John 20:25-29** *The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "**Peace to you!**" Then He said to Thomas, "**Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be***

unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Here was one of the disciples who walked with Jesus for three years and heard His teachings, but still he did not believe, unless he could see it for himself. We call him, "doubting Thomas".

But then we have all been Doubting Thomases before, maybe even recently.

Have you ever felt like you weren't saved? Like maybe the Lord had forgot about you? The key word here is "*felt*".

You're not the first to go by your feelings, and you won't be the last.

Let's look at a great man in the bible who was human like us, and needed to "*FEEL*" the Lord was still with him.

- ***Psalms 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.***

Here is King David praying to the lord after he was confronted by Nathan the prophet, concerning Bathsheba.

David no longer "*FELT*" as if the Lord was with him.

We know that sin will separate us from God, but as David cried out to the Lord and sought His forgiveness, he also desired not to be separated from the Lord.

If you ever feel you have done a terrible sin, or like a dog for something stupid you did, just read this entire Psalm (51) and it will cause you to have a repentant heart and you will know that God has forgiven you.

So is saving faith the kind of faith that I Cor. 12 is talking about?

I don't believe so.

Remember, in order to receive the gifts of the Spirit, you have to have the Holy Spirit; and in order to have the Spirit, you have to be a believer.

So what kind of faith is Paul talking about here.

Remember that the gifts of the Spirit are not for you, but are for the edifying or building up the church.

So how can faith be used to build up the church? Let's look at the definition of faith again in the bible in

- ***Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.***

Let's look at some more verses that have to do with faith and what it means for the church:

- ***John 13:19 Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.***

- **John 14:29** *And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.*
- **John 19:35** *And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.*
- **John 20:31** *but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

We see here, that faith will cause people to believe in Jesus or to help increase others faith.

We should also remember that the gifts are not just for the edification of the church, but also for the glorification of Jesus.

We see in these verses that John wrote the words of Jesus, showing that He did things and taught so that they might believe in Him.

John also wrote that others would believe in Jesus also.

Basically John was writing to increase their faith in Jesus.

When I teach it is for the purpose of increasing your faith in Jesus, and strengthening your relationship with Him.

Here is another example of a man who came to Jesus desiring to be healed.

Matt 8:2 (NLT) *Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached Jesus. He knelt before him, worshiping. "Lord," the man said, "if you want to, you can make me well again."*

Here we see the leper coming to Jesus desiring to be healed by Jesus. Notice he said, “you can make me well again”, not “you might be able to make me well again” He had faith that Jesus could cleanse him of his illness.

So how does this work in the church?

We all know that Jesus can do anything, but do we believe that He will do what we ask Him to do?

- **John 14:13-14** *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it"*
- **John 15:7-8** *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."*
- **John 16:23-27** *"And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I*

will tell you plainly about the Father. "In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; "for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.

So as we ask in faith in Jesus' name, does that mean that He will give us whatever we want? Like a new car, or win the Lotto, or maybe a new home?

No, remember that we are to use the gifts to minister to others.

If we desire cars or homes or to win the Lotto, isn't it for ourselves and not others?

Sure, we can try to persuade God or try to make Him think that we are doing it for His glory, but we all know that it's for our own desires.

As we see in these verses that we ask that Jesus and/or the Father would be glorified!

So do you understand what the gift of faith is?

We have looked at what faith is, but what is, the gift of faith?

Let's look at:

- ***Dan 3:14-18 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? "Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. "If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. "But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."***

This is the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, when they refused to bow down to king Nebuchadnezzar's idol.

I like what they say in verse 18 *even if He does not*. Faith is not in getting what you expect, but what God wants to do and accepting it, no matter what the consciences; even death.

We pray to God and say, "Oh God, please do it in this way, just like this"

When did we become God and know how to handle the situation we are praying for?

Here's another example of the gift of faith.

Gen. 37-40 (If you don't have a bible right now, write these chapters in Genesis down and read it later.)

Joseph was the son of Jacob, and Jacob loved his son more than any of his other sons.

So he gave him a coat of many colors.

Joseph had 2 dreams and the dreams basically said that his brothers, mother, and even his father would bow down to him.

His brothers got jealous of him and sold him into slavery.

As a slave, he was the servant of Potiphar, the captain of the guards for Pharaoh.

God blessed him in everything he did and God even blessed the people that he served.

Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him and when he refused, she had him thrown in jail for attempted rape, even though it wasn't true.

When he was in jail, there were two guys, the butler and baker of Pharaoh, they each had a dream and Joseph interpreted their dreams correctly.

Let's pick up the story in

- **Gen. 40:14** *"But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house.*

I'm sure Joseph was tired of being locked up in prison and wanted to get out, and as he interpreted their dreams he said, *"remember me, I've done nothing wrong"*.

Was he thinking, *"This is how God will get me out of here"* But if you look at the first verse of chapter 41

- **Gen 41:1** *Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river.*

We see that 2 years had gone by, and Joseph was still in prison.

How long have you been in prison with a particular sin? Does it seem like you will never get out?

Has it been 2 years, or maybe even 20 years?

This is where faith comes in. It may seem impossible and like there is no way out. But God always has a way out.

If Joseph was let out 2 years earlier, he may have returned to his father, Jacob, then 9 years later famine would have hit, and many would have died, maybe even himself.

God knew where Joseph was and how He wanted to use him, and when.

Now after you read this story you glorify God for what He did.

Joseph had faith in the dreams that God gave him years ago, and that they would come to pass, even if he was in prison, he knew God would never fail him.

If you read on in the story we see that Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream and is made his right hand man. When the famine happens, eventually his whole family comes to him and bows down to him just as God showed him in his dreams.

What has God shown you?

Just because it hasn't happened yet does your faith start to fail you?

Are you seem to have the gift of faith like Joseph, trusting God no matter how long it takes?

Maybe someone else is encouraging you not to lose faith. Maybe they have the gift of faith and they are encouraging you to believe, because they have that faith and believe in God.

Do you have this faith like Joseph?

How can this faith help the church or someone in the church?

How can this faith glorify God or Jesus?

Next week we will look at a few more examples of faith being used in the bible and apply it to our lives and the church today.