

Faith May 2007

by Bill McLeod

Faith is the means of pleasing God and the means of salvation, and it is a work, a fight, and a shield that brings joy to the heart and is a walk and a run with God.

Duration: 14:40

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having faith in God's promises. He mentions that there are 24 promises in Galatians chapter three alone, and encourages the audience to have a faith walk. The preacher also highlights the connection between faith and love, stating that true faith works by love. He quotes Spurgeon, who describes faith as the soul at rest in the love of God. Additionally, the preacher mentions the importance of doing everything in faith, as anything done without faith is considered sin according to Romans 14:3.

Transcript

This is Bill McLeod speaking from Winnipeg, Canada, on the subject of faith. Acts 14:27 speaks about God opening the door of faith to the Gentile world. But there are many, many references to faith.

In Scripture I did count, I forget exactly how many now, but the word of faith, Romans 10:8, speaks about the word of faith which we preach. That is, we're preaching to sinners that they can be saved by faith in the crucified, risen Son of God. That's called the word of faith.

That's called the door of faith. Acts 14:27, he opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And the door of faith, it means that the gospel was preached to the non-Jewish world, to the Gentile world.

And there's been a door of faith opened. But Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God. So men have to be saved by faith in the crucified, risen Christ.

The law of faith, boasting is excluded, it says, by the law of faith. Boasting excluded. All pride abates.

And so we sing that in one of our songs. It's called the law of faith, the law of faith. There's no room in the law of faith for boasting, absolutely none.

It's excluded by this law of faith. The Bible speaks about the household of faith in Galatians 6.10. You know when the poor man in Luke 16, when he died, it said he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And of course, Abraham was not heaven, it's just, it's true, Abraham was a man of faith, a great man of faith.

And so we get to heaven, that is to Abraham's bosom, the same way he did, by faith. And so the household of faith. Abraham was the father of us all, we're told.

There's a household made up of Christians only, that is of people who have faith in the crucified risen Son of God. Hebrews 10.22 speaks about the full assurance of faith. Let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith.

A true heart, no hypocrisy, not a feigned thing, it's a real thing. So let's draw near with full assurance of faith. And then there's a phrase, the hearing of faith in Galatians 3.2. Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Well obviously we receive the spirit by faith, not by the works of the law.

That's made very clear of course. Then we read of the spirit of faith, 2 Corinthians 4.13. We have in the same spirit of faith. That is the same spirit of faith as other true believers had.

And so it's called the spirit of faith. I can't emphasize too strongly dear people that there's no way of pleasing the God of Heaven except through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I meet people sometimes who tell me they have lots of faith in God but they don't believe in Jesus Christ.

Well Christ said no man comes to the Father but by me. If you haven't come to God through Christ, you haven't come to God at all. You're just self-deceived.

You create your own God and you'll never make it to Heaven. Listen, God sent His Son. The Father sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.

Christ said neither came I of myself but He sent me. Okay. And so we have to have that same spirit of faith because we're sanctified, we're saved by faith.

The Bible speaks about God giving us all a measure of faith. Romans 12.3 and 12.6, the measure of faith. We don't all have the same amount of faith.

I know George Mueller, the famous man of faith and prayer from Bristol, England used to say that faith is simply a muscle. We all have a muscle there. The more we use it, the stronger it becomes.

The less we use it, the weaker it becomes. And he left it that way. But at the same time, faith is spoken of as one of the gifts that God gives to certain people.

First Corinthians chapter 12. And so you may have a special gift of faith. Certainly George Mueller had that.

I'm not sure he recognized it that way because he used that analogy of it being just a muscle of anybody. And it is true, of course, that anybody can exercise faith by the grace of God. And so it's a measure of faith.

And as Christian believers we all have been dealt by God a measure of faith. We may not all be called like George Mueller was to have 2,000 orphans, 3,000 of his staff supported entirely by faith. Not backed up by any church or backed up by any organization.

Needs were never shared with people outside their own group. They just trusted God. And this man Mueller, he had a prayer ledger, you know.

And in this ledger he would have the day he prayed, no the prayer he prayed, the day he prayed. And the third thing was the day God answered. He had, I believe it was 30,000 answers to prayer the same day he prayed.

But he had a larger group of 50,000 that took God longer than a day, maybe a month, maybe a year, maybe 10 years. He prayed for two men to be saved for 40 years. One of them died, that is Mueller died, and one of them was saved just a year before he died.

The other guy was saved a year after Mueller died. But the measure of faith. So you can't measure your faith but you can try your faith.

Our faith is being constantly tried, you know. The Bible uses the phrase the righteousness of faith in Romans 4.13. The obedience of faith in Romans 1.5. By whom we have received this grace from God for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name. Obedience to the faith.

There is obedience here, you see. If I have not believed, if I have not obeyed God, I haven't really believed God. This is the problem.

You can say I believe Christ died for my sins, but if you don't receive him into your heart by faith, you haven't really obeyed the gospel. The Bible speaks about obeying the gospel. It's putting faith in Christ.

It's receiving Christ. The obedience of faith. For obedience, by whom we have received grace and apostleship, Paul wrote in Romans 1. By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name.

Then the work of faith, 1st Thessalonians 1.3. Remember without ceasing, the work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope. And then 2nd Thessalonians 1.11. He said here that God fulfills the work of faith with power. Ours is the work of faith.

We keep on believing. It may be a long wait. But God fulfills eventually, someday, one day, he fulfills your work of faith with power.

So faith is a work. It's also called a fight. It's 1st Timothy 6.12. Fight the good fight of faith.

And we're to take the shield of faith whereby we can quench or put out. The Greek word quench there means throwing water on a fire. And so by the shield of faith we can quench all the fiery darts that the devil throws at us.

It's a fight. There's three words there. Flee, follow and fight.

It's really interesting. The work of faith. Flee.

That's in 1st Timothy chapter 6. Flee these things. Flee pursuing wealth. Flee pursuing money.

And fight the good fight of faith. Follow after righteousness and godliness and these good things. And above all taking the shield of faith.

Above all, he said, that's important then. Taking the shield of faith. And you'll need that shield because Satan will constantly hurl fiery darts at you.

Then we read of the breastplate of faith in 1st Thessalonians 5.8. Putting on the breastplate of faith. So there again it's part of the armor of God. Shield of faith.

Breastplate of faith. Now the Bible speaks about the trial of your faith in 1st Peter 1.7. That the trial of your faith be much more precious than the gold of parishes, though it be charred with fire, not be found in the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love and whom though now you have seen him not yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls, of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied unto the grace that should come unto you, searching water, what manner of time, and the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us they administer things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. All right.

The shield of faith. The breastplate of faith. The trial of your faith.

Much more precious than the gold of parishes, I say. Then the joy of faith. Paul said in Philippians 1.25, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your joy of faith.

He'd been talking about dying and going to be with Christ, which he said was far better. But he said it's more needful that I stay to help you people so that your joy of faith will grow. You meet some Christian, you think they've been baptized in lemon juice or something, there's no joy in their experience, no joy in their face.

I remember one time sitting in a shopping center waiting for my wife, and I was just sitting there thinking and praying, and a lady walking by came over and she said, why do you look so sad, why do you look so sad? And she walked away before I could say anything. I wasn't feeling sad at all, but I guess my face was not reflecting the faith in my heart the way that it should have. The joy of faith.

It brings joy to our heart when we're walking in faith. And we're told to walk in faith. We're also told to run in faith.

It's interesting, there are 24 things that happen to us Christians by faith in the New Testament Scriptures. Well, we know we're saved by faith, we're kept by faith, Peter tells us. Then we walk by faith, Paul tells us.

And then we run the Christian life by faith. We read that in Hebrews chapter 12 and elsewhere. And then we're drawn near to God by faith.

We saw that in Hebrews chapter 10. We receive the righteousness of God by faith in Philippians chapter 3. And we receive the Holy Spirit by faith. We noted that already in Galatians chapter 3. There are 24 things like this.

And so it's a faith walk, dear people, it's a faith walk all the way. And our faith should be particularly in the promises of God. They're called exceeding great and faithful.

These promises of God, they bring joy to our soul. The joy of faith. It must be unfeigned faith.

1 Timothy 1.5 Paul said, the end of the commandment is, one translation says, the goal of our instruction is what? It's love rising out of a pure heart. Not of a genuine faith. And so, 1 Timothy 1.5. The end of the commandment is love rising out of a good conscience.

Not of a pure heart. Not of a genuine faith. There are three things there, you see.

Alright. True faith works by love. Galatians 5.6 says, faith works by love.

And it does. And there was a person who said that faith is the soul at rest in the love of God. That's true faith.

The soul at rest in the love of God. And Romans 14.3 says, whatsoever is not of faith is sin. If you're doing something and you can't do it in faith, then you're sinning.

If your conscience condemns you, the Bible says, God is greater than your heart and knows all things. There's such a thing as being self-condemned. Doing something not of faith.

Alright. I don't have one exact text here. But certainly, from these many texts we've given you, we must understand without faith it is impossible to please God.

Hebrews 11.6. And that great Hebrews 11, great faith chapter. What a chapter. I read it often.

Not just when I come to it and when I'm reading Hebrews. But I often just turn there and read it. And let it speak to my soul as I see what others did through faith.

Obtained promises and righteousness. Escaped the violence of the sword and all these other things. And others, again, by faith they died by the sword.

Some escaped the violence of the sword. Others were killed by faith by a sword. And so, it's a faith walk.

We walk by faith, not by sight. Maybe that should be my text. I don't normally give a text at the end, but that would be a wonderful text, I think.

We walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians chapter 5. Thank you and God bless you, whoever you are. Walk by faith, not by sight.

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