

Faith

by Jacob Prasch

True faith involves being faithful to God's will and trusting His timing and provision, even in the midst of suffering and perseverance.

Duration: 12:49

Scripture: Hebrews 11:9

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having faith in God and not placing our hope in this fallen world. He highlights the examples of biblical figures who lived as sojourners, trusting in God's promises rather than earthly possessions. The speaker warns against false teachings that promote a prosperity gospel, claiming that suffering is a result of a lack of faith. He references the apostle Paul's own experiences of suffering and persecution for the sake of the gospel, emphasizing the need for believers to embrace a crucified life and trust in God's provision according to His will.

Transcript

It's another subject that causes much confusion to many believers. A word that is bantered around, often with few people looking at what the word really means in the scriptures, either in the Greek or Hebrew language, or the context in which they are used. You know, if someone was speaking Afrikaans or Zulu and translating into English, and the person in English was telling you what the person speaking Afrikaans or Zulu had said, you might be pretty confused if they didn't qualify for you, that the terms don't have the exact same meaning in the original language they made in our language.

Faith is like this. For instance, we always have people telling us things like, the righteous shall live by faith, or we're justified by faith through grace. That is true.

What we don't yet often know is that the Hebrew word for faith, emunah, and the Greek word for faith, pistis, have two meanings. The Hebrew word for faith, emunah, is also the Hebrew word for faithfulness. Thus, when we read in the book of Habakkuk, chapter 2, the righteous shall live by faith, it also says the righteous shall live by faithfulness.

In the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 32, verse 20, the Hebrew people who have backslidden would be accused of having no faith, but they are also accused of having no faithfulness, not being faithful to what they've already received. The Hebrew language does not make a distinction between faith and

faithfulness. In the New Testament, however, either does the Greek language.

The Greek word, *pistis*, is both the Greek word for faith, and the Greek word for faithfulness. Now, we have variations of it. For instance, in Matthew, chapter 6, verse 30, when Jesus rebukes his disciples, or rebukes people, O ye of little faith, he uses the word *oligopistos*, which is simply a variation.

However, both the Greek word and the Hebrew word for faith are also the word for faithfulness. What we can act on in faith, and accept in faith, are always related to faithfulness. People are simply not telling you this today, most of the time.

Let's look to the epistle of 1 John, chapter 3, verse 22. 1 John, chapter 3, verse 22. This is what we read.

And whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. Receiving the things we ask are related to faithfulness to his covenant, to his commandments, to keeping his word, to doing the things that he tells us to do in his word. Hence, we can have faith in things, and believe we're going to receive, but if we are acting without being faithful, we are not really acting in faith.

And if we are asking for something, when we are not being faithful, we are not asking for faith. We make a distinction. The word of God does not.

Now, some people will always take a verse out of context. Be careful. Satan did that when he tempted Jesus.

And there are people doing it today, so often, on the subject of faith. So, I'll quote to you the words of Jesus in John, chapter 14, verse 14. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

What they won't tell you, however, is the surrounding verses. If you love me, you will keep my commandments, comes immediately afterwards. Once again, the relationship between faith and faithfulness.

Yes, if you ask in my name, I will do it. However, are you being faithful? Can you have faith for what the Lord promised? Well, if you're being faithful, you can have faith. Let's continue looking at this.

People will always tell us, but Jesus said, if you ask anything in my name, seek and you will find, markets shall be opened. And today, they are saying, believe God for that BMW or that Mercedes-Benz. Believe God for that money.

Believe God for that holiday in Britain or Europe. Believe God for this. Name it and claim it, and if you don't get it, you don't have adequate faith.

And if you're not healed, it's because you don't have faith. Well, it's more likely you don't have faithfulness. Because if you were being faithful, you would not be practicing the sin of covetousness.

We're told in Paul's epistle to Timothy, if we have our basic human needs met, food, clothing, we should be content. If we're not content, we're not being faithful. Therefore, we're asking for things God has never promised to give.

They're playing Satan's game, taking verses out of context. Being faithful to Jesus means living according to his precepts, and his precepts are ones of contentment. He said the Son of Man had no place to lay his

head, but he also said a servant is not above his master.

We see St. Paul talking about his life in this world. Today, we have people giving a false view of faith, which says we don't have to suffer, and if we do suffer, it's because we don't have faith. Well, what did Paul say in 2 Corinthians 4? Verse 8, We're afflicted in every way, but not crushed.

Perplexed, but not despairing. Persecuted, not forsaken. Struck down, not destroyed.

Caring about the death of Jesus in our body. In 2 Corinthians, Paul talks about the same thing in the same way. He talks about this in chapter 10.

He talks about his own suffering. He talks about the things that he goes through for the sake of the gospel. He talks about, in 2 Corinthians, being shipwrecked.

He talks about being flogged, imprisoned, rejected. Suffering. And today, we have people saying, you don't have to suffer.

If you suffer, you're not in God's will. It's because you don't have faith. You're a king's kid.

Christ suffered for us. Dear friends, Jesus said to follow him. Pick up your cross and follow him.

Live a crucified life. What do these people know that Paul didn't, when Paul talks of his own suffering for the sake of the gospel? The fact is, they know absolutely nothing. They're not telling you the truth.

They are heretics. They are lying to you. Of course we can trust God to meet our needs.

But his way of meeting our needs might not be what we think our needs are. His grace will always be sufficient. He'll never give us more than we can handle.

At the same time, our needs are one thing. Our wants are another. Moreover, the way he meets our needs is his way.

In his time, on his terms. And what our needs are, are the way he defines our needs. Not the way we do.

The world has fallen. We have an old creation. An old nature who thinks we need this, that, the other thing.

The biggest need we have is for more of Jesus. Faith and faithfulness are inseparable. But let's push on and look at this more closely.

Much of what people today are calling faith is actually not faith at all. Sometimes it is actually hope. The word for hope in Greek is a different word.

Turn with me to Hebrews, chapter 10, verse 23. The epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 10, verse 23. We read, Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

God is faithful. We are to hold fast to what he promised in hope. Not in faith, but in hope.

Now what is hope? Hope in the Bible does not mean what it does in the English language. We say, I hope it will not rain tomorrow. Or I hope I will do well on my exam at university.

Biblical hope is an entirely different word with a different meaning. God's definition of hope is future fact. Future fact.

Faith is not only related to faithfulness, it is related to hope. To understand faith, and to a degree to understand hope, let's turn to Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 1. Now faith is the assurance, the substance of things hoped for. The conviction of things unseen.

Faith is the assurance, or the substance. The Greek word here is hypostasis. And the conviction of things unseen.

Conviction is eklenko, or verification or conviction. Now it goes on describing the faith life. It talks about a combination of good things and bad things.

And it gives examples of faithful faith in the Old Testament about what the faith life is. Let's look at what it says about Abraham. We're told in Hebrews 11 that he lived as a sojourner in verses 9 and 10, dwelling in tents.

Even though it was the promised land, and a land promised to him, his real hope was on another city, whose foundation and architect and builder is God. No place does biblical faith tell us to trust or hope in this life or this world. On the contrary, Jesus said this world is fallen.

The whole world lies in the power of the wicked one. We are to put our faith in the kingdom to come. But let's continue looking at this chapter.

Let's skip down to verse 34. Quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight. Good things because of faith.

But now let's examine the other side of the coin. Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection.

Others experienced mocking, scourging, chains, and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were slaughtered, they were tempted, put to death with the sword. They went about in sheepskins, goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated.

Men of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts, mountains, caves, and holes in the ground, having gained approval through their faith. Today we have heretics telling you you don't have to suffer, and if you do it's because you have no faith. But the word of God says these men had true faith.

That's why they were willing to be stoned, thrown into, homeless, destitute, afflicted, and ill-treated. Yet the Lord never abandoned them or forethought them. Ask anything in my name you will receive? Yes.

But let's look at John chapter 14 in light of the apostolic explanation of it. In the epistle of St. James, chapter 4, we read in verse 3, You ask and you do not receive, because you have asked with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasure. Paul said, If your needs are met, be content.

These people are naming it and claiming it with false motives. They are worshiping mammon. They are not teaching you faith in Jesus.

They are teaching you faith in faith. In 1 John chapter 5, verses 14 and 15, we must ask according to His will and faith. If we are not in His will and asking by His will, we are not being faithful.

Then we are not acting in true faith. God bless you.

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