

The Life of Faith Is Not an Easy Path

by Mike Morrow

The Christian life is lived by faith, which involves obedience to God's word and strategy, and cooperation with God in the faith life.

Duration: 49:13

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-2, Hebrews 12:5-11, Hebrews 12:14-17, Hebrews 12:28-29

Topics: "Faith And Trials", "Christian Sanctification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of faith, mirroring Christ in our actions and responses to challenges. It highlights the training and discipline God provides to conform us to the image of Jesus, encouraging believers to endure tests and walk in holiness and peace. The speaker urges listeners to focus on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and to trust in God's plan for their lives, even in the midst of hardships and trials.

Transcript

Grateful again for the privilege of being here this week. It's been my blessing to meet you and to know you and to fellowship with you. Some may think that I'm here for you, but I think I'm here because of you.

I believe the Lord has brought me here to teach me some things and to show me some things. And I've been watching and learning. God's been good to me these days just to let me know you and hear you as you fellowship together.

Hear your concerns and your hunger for the Word of God. I've been talking to you about the Christian life, and I've been talking to you about faith. The Christian life is lived by faith.

As you receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him. And that simply means you received Christ by faith, and the just shall live by their faith. As we looked at Hebrews chapter 11, I talked to you about the definition of faith.

It is the title deed. The fact that you have faith about something is the assurance that you have what you have faith about. Now, we're not talking about wishful thinking here.

We're talking about God-given faith, and you know the difference. You pray about something. You believe something's the will of God.

God confirms that to your heart. You know that it's so, and because you know that it's so, God makes it so. That's faith.

That's the way faith works. And we talked about that. We tried to define faith, and then we demonstrated faith through the rest of the chapter.

I didn't go through all the rest of the chapter, but using several of the characters that the writer gives us, showing us how faith works. He demonstrated how faith works. Noah got a word from God.

It's going to rain. It's going to rain so badly that everybody's going to be destroyed. And then God gave him not only a word, but He gave him a strategy how to deal with the rain.

Build an ark. And so Noah obeyed God, and by obeying God, he saved himself and his house, and he saved humanity. Now, that's the way faith works.

That's just about as simple an explanation of how faith works as you can get. Faith is not something that you have inherent in you. It's not something that's in the heart of men.

And you don't carry faith around, as an old friend of mine used to say, you don't have it in a hollow tooth back here somewhere. God gives you faith. The Bible says that faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and that God gives to each man as He wills.

God works faith in us. And as we live our Christian lives, we're to learn how to cooperate with God in this faith life. The just shall live by their faith.

Now, when you come down to Hebrews chapter 11, and you just read through those awesome passages where Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents. They didn't fear the king. The king said, kill all the boy babies.

They said, we will not kill our son. You know that story. The mother puts the baby in a little rush boat, puts him out there where the alligators are, crocodiles in the Nile River, close to where Pharaoh's daughter comes down to bathe.

And then she says to her daughter, you watch him, you watch, you watch. Here comes Pharaoh's daughter. She washes, and all of a sudden she sees the ark, and the baby's crying, and God puts compassion in her heart.

She said, I know this is probably one of the little Israelite babies that has been commanded to kill, but we're going to save him. And about that time, Miriam runs up and says, hey, do you need somebody to take care of him? I know somebody I believe would be willing to take care of him. And Moses is raised on the knee and the breast of his own mama.

You think she might have told him stories about how God was going to deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage? You think she might have told him things that God had promised Israel he was going to do for them? So you have the story of Moses. You have all of these other stories, how Moses himself chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The Bible tells us that he esteemed, and a brother mentioned this this afternoon, esteemed the reproach of Christ greater than the treasures of Egypt.

Think about that contrast. He'd rather be spit on for Jesus than to have the treasures of Egypt. He counted them worth more than the treasures of Egypt.

So through faith, he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood. And it goes all the way down through here. And then the Bible says in verse number 36, and others had trial of cruel markings and scourgings.

And the Bible says they had bonds and imprisonments. They were stoned. They were sawed in two.

They were tested. They were slain with the sword. Hey, these are people who are living by faith.

These are not the people God's mad at. These are the people that God commends. The Bible says they wandered around in sheepskin and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented.

And then God said, let me give you my opinion of them. Of whom the world was not worthy. The Bible says they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth.

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. Now, I want to say this to you this afternoon. And I've heard this as I've fellowshiped with you.

And I've talked to several of you. And you know, you want to talk to me. And that's a good thing.

But I'll tell you something. I don't have any answers. God has the answers.

But I hear this. I hear something. I hear a recurring theme.

And this is not, I'm not revealing anything about anybody. But I hear a recurring theme. And that recurring theme is depression and hardship.

And there, you know, boy, I'm really going through this terrible experience. I want to ask you a question. Do you think if you were wandering through the world, and people were looking to stone you, and when you went out on the street today, somebody chased you down with a bowie knife, tried to cut your throat.

And the only place you had to live was in a cave. You had to hide in a cave. And you were going through what the Bible calls cruel markings and scourgings and bonds and imprisonments.

Do you think that you would be walking around saying, glory, hallelujah, I just feel the presence of the Lord so strongly. God is being so good to me, and I'm just enjoying life here. My wife and I are thinking about taking a vacation.

You know, we're just going to, we're just enjoying life here, and God's being so, God's blessings resting on us. You know, some poor fella in Iraq who reads on the internet of some Christian who honestly is trying to give God glory in his life, who says something like, you know, this past week we were allowed to buy a \$75,000 house. God is blessing us so much.

Can you imagine a little boy reading that while he's looking over his shoulder because somebody is wanting to cut his head off for Jesus' sake. I don't want to discount the physical blessings God has given us. But some of the devil's people live in better houses than you do.

Some of the devil's people have better cars and trucks than you do. You see, that's not necessarily the sign of the blessing of God. And some of God's choicest people are walking around being hated, and the

devil, you know, hates them.

But there are people walking around, and I have lived to see it. You have lived to see it. There are people today in our world who are living from cave to cave, and they are living from street to street, and they really have no assurance that they're going to make it another day in this world, and their one offense is that they love Jesus Christ.

We live in that age today. I am convinced that we in America have lived through an anomaly of Christianity. We've had about 150, 200 years here of a strange kind of Christianity.

It's the kind that gets up on Sunday morning and goes to church, and we sit there and listen to the preacher preach, and we call each other brother and sister, and shake hands with one another, and hug necks, and go home and watch the football game, and eat a big dinner. And if we're really dedicated to the Lord, and really sacrificing for Christ, we'll get up maybe and go to the evening service. And then if we're absolute fanatics, we show up on Wednesday night, pray.

And then the rest of the week, nothing in our life relates to what happened down at the church house. You see Brother George over at the church house, and when you see him down on the job, he's just, hey George. But he's Brother George over at the church house.

We have lived through that age, but I'm telling you, we're coming out of that age. We're coming out of that age in the world, and we're coming out of that age in America. And things are changing more quickly than you can imagine.

Jeremiah, I think it was, asked some people, he said, if you're having trouble when the streams are low, what are you going to do when the Jordan floods? What are you going to do when the horsemen come? If the footmen bother you, what are you going to do when the horsemen come? Listen to me fellas, I'm saying this to you. It doesn't matter how you feel. It doesn't matter what you think.

It doesn't matter what the devil throws at you. It just doesn't matter. It doesn't matter.

Get off your feelings. Quit petting yourself. Quit thinking about what a rough time you're having.

And think about what a rough time some other brothers are having. And go somewhere and bury your face in the sand and weep for them. I'll tell you something.

If we get our minds off ourselves and get our minds on our brothers and sisters, and especially our minds in worship on the Lord Jesus Christ, a whole lot of problems that we're having would be gone. They'd be gone. I'm talking about personal problems that we have in our lives.

Somebody said, well, I'm not going to confide in you anymore. That's all right. I'm leaving after a while anyway.

You got a pastor there. Got several of them around here. They had cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment.

These all got a good report. They had a witness in their heart from God that they were righteous. They had the witness of the Spirit in them.

Hey, that's all that matters. Your outward experience is not all that important. What is really important is, I know I'm saved.

I have a heavenly Father. He loves me. He will always love me.

He has always promised to love me. God is dealing with me as if I'm His son because I am His son. The Lord God is not sitting around with a baseball bat ready to, boy, I was raised in the kind of Christianity that said, do right.

Bang, God's going to get you. You better do right. Bang, God's going to get you.

God's going to get you. God's going to get you. I got news for you.

God's done got me. He got me a long time ago, and He's been keeping me ever since. I have to fight this battle every time I say something like that.

You know, people say, oh, well, then I can go live any way I want to. Regeneration ensures that you can't do that. God changes a goat to a sheep.

He can't be a goat anymore. He wants grass. He don't want poison ivy and honeysuckle.

He wants sheep food. By the way, if you're pastoring a church, dealing with people all the time, and you got a problem with goats, just feed them. Just feed sheep food.

Just put out sheep food. Goats don't like sheep food. They'll go hunt some goat food somewhere.

And there's plenty of it out there. Somebody said, oh, we don't want anybody leaving our church. Best thing ever happened.

Some churches from getting cleaned up. Get the mess out of them. Get people out of the leadership who are not godly people and who don't love the Lord and who aren't sold out to Jesus.

These all, having obtained a good report, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. All of these people, David and Moses and Abraham and all of these witnesses, we're compassed about with them.

And he's going to tell us how that works in a minute. But he says, so let us lay aside. Every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, every weight that pulls on us and every sin that entraps us, lay it aside and let us with.

With patience, that word means spiritual staying power. It means the ability to get up under a load and pull it. He says, let us with patience run the race that's set before us, looking unto Jesus.

And here it is. You want to talk about a life of faith. Here it is.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. You know, you would be surprised how those of us who have fought this health and wealth gospel and preached against the false teachings and the feel good gospels that are around, how much we bought into it ourselves. You'd be surprised how much we've bought into it ourselves.

You get up for morning and you don't feel too good and you wonder, God, what have I done? Well, what you did was you eat pizza at three o'clock last night and you ought to feel bad. It's a chemical thing. We take it over into the spiritual thing.

We just know God's condemning us over something. Let me tell you something. The people who've walked on this earth, who have had the worst time on this earth are people who are extremely right with God.

And I'm naming one here before you this afternoon, whose name was Jesus. I would say he was extremely right with God. Would you not? Since he was the son of God and since he lived an absolutely perfect life and since the father could look at him and say, this is my beloved son.

I've searched him out and I can't find anything wrong with him. I am pleased with him. I would say he was thoroughly right with God.

He lived his life that way. And he's been put up before us as an example of faith. He is the author of faith.

He is the finisher of faith. He is the epitome of what it means to live the faith life. Now, how did Jesus live his life? I'll tell you how he lived his life.

I see what the father's doing and I do the work. I hear what the father's saying and I speak. That's the faith life.

You understand what God is doing and you join him in what he's doing. You hear what God is saying and you say what God is saying. When I came here, you know, several of you have asked me questions about biblical manhood.

And you know, I wanted to preach on biblical manhood. And I wanted to talk about how you ought to be the head of your house. I asked my church the other day, I told our church the other day, I was preaching along those lines and I said, I'm really not interested in who wears the pants at your house.

I want to know who wears the dresses. And I really wanted to preach along those lines. But I'm going to tell you something.

You start walking by faith and living for Christ in the way that the Bible teaches you're supposed to. You start getting your instructions from heaven and you start saying your words that the Lord gives you. I come here to tell you what God tells me to tell you.

You start saying what God wants you to say. That's the faith life. You got, you preachers, you got a message from somebody or for somebody.

God's given you that message for somebody, preach it. If God's saying it, you say it. Again, how was his life? How was Christ's life? It was a life of constant fellowship with his father.

And what did Jesus say about us? He said, I won't leave you orphans, but I'm going to go. And when I go, I'm going to send the Holy Spirit and he will be with you forever. Now we've got us a friend, brothers.

We've got us a friend. We've got one who is with us. We have one who is in us.

We have one who surrounds us. We have one who will anoint us. We have one who will empower us.

We have one who will rebuke us. We have one who will guide us and lead us. And he is here.

And it's a relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. And that's how you learn to walk with God. Never separate from the written word of God.

Never, never, never but hear me. He makes the principles and the truths of the word of God living, not just ink on paper, but living words that I can live by. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.

There's a little controversy about that word for, for the joy that was set before him. It's anti, against the joy that was set before him. Kind of parallels Philippians chapter 2. And the admonition is, think like this.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, did not feel himself robbed when he was asked or when it was decreed that he become a man. Wasn't something that he said, oh no, I'm God, I'm not going down there and live in the shell of a human life. Let this mind be in you.

You don't catch me going to Mexico City. I'm not going to go live in the slums of, where are we? What's the name of this place? San Antonio. I'm not going to do that.

Who thought it not something to be grasped after. How many times when God puts his hand on a man and calls him to go someplace or do something, he turns around and starts grasping after what he's got and where he is. I tell you what, faith, life is cut off immediately.

You can't walk by faith when you're trying to walk by sight and hold on to where you are and who you are. He says, he was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation. Took on him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of man.

That was before he came as a man. That was his preparation. Lesson of the next verse.

But made himself of no reputation. The next verse says, and being found in fashion as a man. He kept up the process.

He humbled himself even more. And the Bible says he became obedient under death. He became obedient even under the death of the cross.

God must have really been angry with Jesus. Make him leave heaven's glory, come down here and live a man's life. And then he couldn't.

Well, he could have been born into a palace, couldn't he? But no, he had to be born into a carpenter's home. It could have made a lot of money being a carpenter, couldn't it? Well, no, he had to become an itinerant preacher. Well, he could have become a famous preacher, couldn't he? Well, he was famous, but he was as much hated as he was loved.

They said, well, he's a liar. He's born of fornication. That's what they said about him.

He's a false prophet. He's leading the people astray. He came unto his own and his own received him not.

They had the Old Testament. They had the messianic promises. They had Isaiah 53.

They had the word of God. And here he is before them and they received him not. God must have really been angry with him, right? No, he was exactly in the will of God.

Get it out of your head. If you're having it tough, God's angry with you. If you're having it tough, God's mad at you.

You may be smack dab in the middle of God's will. You do know what smack dab means, don't you? I was in Romania on one occasion and this fellow was a translator and he bragged to me. He said, brother Mike, he said, I am the best translator in Romania.

He said, you cannot say anything that I do not know. I said, well, praise God, brother. And I thought to myself, you don't know where I'm from, but we'll go on with this.

And I got in a big way preaching somewhere and I got right in the middle of my message. And I said, you can be smack dab in the middle of God's will. And he stopped and he looked at me and he said, smack dab, smack dab.

What is this smack dab? But you know, you're from Texas. You know what smack dab is. You can be in the middle of God's will going through what someone would call hell on earth and be exactly where God wants you to be.

Have you thought about what Jesus suffered? My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even under death. The hour of darkness has arrived. Oh, father, if this cup could pass from me, great blobs of clotting blood flowing down his face, staining those robes.

Oh, God, here they are. They've come to get you, Jesus. Who are you looking for? We're looking for Jesus.

I am, the Bible says they all fell on the ground, scared them to death, and yet he submitted himself to them. And there they go, up to the priest's house, over to Herod and Pilate and back and forth all night long. Slapped around, mocked.

And finally nailed to a cross and hanging between heaven and earth, the pinnacle comes in that moment. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Experiencing the ultimate forsaking, as if a man were to go to hell forever. That is an infinite loss that he's experiencing there.

For you, by the way, sinner, if you've never come to Christ, he did that for your sins, because that's where your sins are going to put you one day if you don't come to Jesus Christ. But he took that upon himself. That infinite, and according to Peter, that happened according to the predetermined counsel of God.

He was right in the middle of the will of God. Please don't buy into this idea that if you're living the life of faith and you're right with God, that it's all going to be rosy and you're not going to have any bad times and you're not going to come up with cancer and you're not going to, your kids are all going to do right, your wife's not going to divorce you and you're not going to, I mean, listen to me, walk with God in spite of everything else. This one thing I do, looking unto Jesus, looking unto Jesus, the Bible says.

Well, let's look back at Hebrews chapter 12 just again for a minute. He said, If you consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest he be wearied and faint in your minds, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. You think about what I just said to you about the, if you will, chastening

of the Lord Jesus.

And you think about God's dealing with you now. And he says, You consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. And don't you be wearied in your mind.

Don't you faint. You've not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And have you forgotten the exhortation? God's talking to you like you're a child.

My son, do not despise the training of the Lord. Don't despise his discipline. Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

Scripture tells us whom the Lord loves, he disciplines. He lays the lash on the back of every son that he receives. If you endure chastening, if you endure this scourging, God's treating you just like he's a son.

He's treating you just like he treated Jesus. Do you understand? The reason it's important that you and I live holy and walk with God and learn what it means to live by faith is because God's called us to mirror Christ. People, listen, the faith is spread from faith to faith, Paul said.

It's not spread from tract to tract. Now, God can use tracts. I'm not saying that.

I gave my testimony the other night, and I'm not sure I told this. I might have told it, but I don't remember. I probably did, but I'm going to tell it again.

Before I was saved, one of the things that affected me so tremendously was that I came into the church building one day. It was empty. Well, I thought it was.

And it's one of those church buildings where on this side, when you come in, you got the vestibule. On this side is a pastor's study, and on this side, there was a closet. And I was just a teenage kid.

I'd been around the church building, and I never looked in that closet. And I thought I'd look in that closet, just see what I didn't know what was in there. And I opened it up, and there was one of the girls, one of the few people in that church, young people on her face, weeping before God.

God intended for me to see her. She didn't intend for me to see her, but God did. Because you know what I saw? I saw her faith.

She didn't know anyone was around. She had slipped over to the church building and slipped into that closet to be alone with Jesus. Hear me, guys.

It's from faith to faith. People see Christ being Christ in you. Jesus being Jesus in you and through you.

And as that happens, faith is born in their heart. Again, faith is a living thing. It's not understanding.

Now, there is a sense where people need to understand the gospel, but hear me closely. It's not one guy giving information to the brain of another guy, and then that guy's brain processing it and saying, yes, I believe that. Amen.

So I must be saved. That's not it at all. It is life coming from one man who has life and being transported to another man who suddenly by the Holy Spirit has life and he sees life.

It is life. Life is given by life. If you want to argue with some of your big scientific guys about evolution and all that other stuff, why don't you just cut to the chase and just ask one little question? Where's life come from? They can build an apple seed, make it look like an apple seed, make it smell like an apple seed, put all the ingredients of an apple seed, put it in the ground, it'll never come up.

No life. Only God gives life. And it's true about the Word of God.

It flows through people. It's from faith to faith. And so the Bible says, if we endure tests and God deals with us as sons, for what son is he whom the Father testeth not? But if ye be without this discipline, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

Now that's King James, very strong. But it's true. If you're a child of God and God is not disciplining your life, and that doesn't mean He's beating on you all the time.

But He's guiding you. He's teaching you. He's training you.

You know what they do in boot camp? I've never been in boot camp. You know, I'm Vietnam age. And I was seventh in the draft.

And Nixon abolished the draft. He's always been my favorite president. But I'm here to tell you that if you're a child of God, God chastises His children.

If you're not, He trains you. He trains you. Now hear me.

If you go to boot camp, they put you in situations where you're crawling under fences and there's live ammunition flying just above your head. If you don't keep down, you'll get blown away. That's pretty good training, you know? I mean, it's pretty smart to do what your sergeant says to do.

They train you in our forces. At least they used to. But when a sergeant said, hit the ground, you hit the ground.

You didn't stand there and say, why would I want to hit the ground? Is there a reason to hit the ground? That looks like an awful hard ground. My mama wouldn't make me hit the ground. None of that.

Hit the ground. Bang, you're down. And it saves your life.

God deals with every one of us that same way. He trains us. He trains you.

That's what the life of faith is about. And that's what you're going through all of your life. And sometimes you're in a raging battle and your training comes in and you understand this is where I am and this is what God has done for me and this is what He's taught me to do in the midst of this situation.

Lord, help me now, oh God. Every child of God is disciplined and trained. I'll tell you what I found out.

I found out that the Lord will give you a test and if you don't pass it, He takes you through a course again and you've got to go back to the same test. Might as well get it right the first time. And then after a while, after a few years, He gives you a refresher course.

You know, so the encouragement here is don't be depressed. Don't be put down. Don't be discouraged by your experience because God is working in your life.

Not when everything's butterflies and roses. Maybe sometimes when everything is going wrong and it's totally messed up. Listen to what He says.

He says, Furthermore, we've had fathers of our flesh which have corrected us. We gave them reverence. Well, I gave my dad reverence.

I was standing in front of him one day as a young teenage boy and he was standing there with a hoe in his hand. Dad had a bad habit. He'd reach up and emphasize his points with, he had a little stick or something.

And I thought he was going to emphasize his point with that hoe handle. And so I kind of stiffened up and he looked at me and stepped back. He said, Ball up your fist at me.

And he really did warn me then. That's the kind of fellow that my dad was. But I'm here to tell you that God doesn't deal with us in ways that's not necessary.

He says the training isn't pleasant. I gave my dad reverence because I scared the death out of him. You ought to give God reverence.

Not because you're scared he's going to hit you over the head with a hoe handle. But because you know he's working for your good and for his glory. You know what he does? Has one purpose in your life.

And that one purpose in your life is to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. One purpose. Everything else in your life is to make you like Jesus.

And that's the journey you're on. And whether it's going to be through being stoned and living in a cave or whether you're going to live in a mansion somewhere. God is working to make you like Jesus.

That's what the training and the discipline is about. Now he says it's grievous. Nevertheless, afterward it yields the fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.

Wherefore, lift up the Bible says the hands which hang down. You ever feel that way? I'm just so tired. I am so tired.

And he says make straight paths for your feet. And stand up on your feeble knees. Boy, I tell you what I can really relate to this stuff.

My legs got weak in the year I was off of them. And I know it when I get up now. And I know it when I'm walking around here now.

You know what God says to me? Get up and walk anyhow. Go on anyway. Lift up your hands anyway.

He said, Brother Mike, every time I get up I get knocked down. Well, you'll learn how to get up, won't you? You'll learn what it means to get up. You'll become an expert getter-upper.

And maybe that's what God's doing in your life. Maybe somebody around you needs to see somebody getting up. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down in the feeble knees and make straight paths for your feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way but let it rather be healed.

You make straight paths for your feet because there's lame folks coming along and they don't need to be stumbling around where you've been stumbling around. They need to be able to walk in your footsteps.

Here's something practical.

Just follow peace with all men. Holiness. Without which no man shall see the Lord.

The word follow, it's like a hound dog on a track of a raccoon or something. Hound holiness. Hound peacefulness.

Hound it. I used to coon out quite a bit. There's two kinds of coon dogs.

There's several kinds of coon dogs but there's two styles of tracking. I had a black and tan hound one time and if the coon walked out through here and went across there and went across there he took every step the coon took and he would beller like a mule, you know, every step, every step, every step. I had a walker hound and he'd smell him here and he'd make a circle and he'd catch him over there and he'd make another circle and he'd catch him over there.

I liked the walker a whole lot better. You catch coons a lot quicker with him than you could the other. But I want to tell you, it doesn't matter which one you do with those but make sure that's what your goal is.

I am hounding. I am after holiness and peacefulness. I am after these attributes in my life.

Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled, lest there be any fornicator, profane person as Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. In other words, what he's saying is over and over again, be diligent in your walk but not, how do I say this? Not in the sense that you're constantly legalistically trying to analyze everything. It doesn't take a lot of analysis to understand God wants me to be a holy man.

It doesn't take a lot of analysis to understand that God wants me to be the one who gives, who brings peace and that God wants me when I'm down to get back up and over and over again, the references to those that are around you, people that are around you, people that are around you. The life of faith involves God living through you and in you, you staying in communion with Him through His Word, you knowing what He says, hearing what He says, saying what He says, doing what He's doing, cooperating with God. That's the life of faith.

And then He brings in these specifics. You don't know what I'm talking about? Okay, walk holy. Chase peace.

Our Lord was pretty specific about that. He said if you've got a brother who's got something against you, you go get straight with your brother. I used to be in a church where this old fellow was just kind of a rude, arrogant type guy.

He'd offend you. I mean, he'd offend you when he didn't even know he was offending you. But every once in a while, he'd get under conviction about it.

And he'd get up before the church and he'd look at the church and he'd say, folks, I'm sorry. If there's anybody here that I've offended, if you'll come to me, we'll get right about it. Years later, I got to reading the Bible and I got to thinking, that looks spiritual, but that wasn't spiritual at all.

If he had offended somebody, he knew it, number one. And he ought to have gotten it straightened out between him and them. And the other side of that if there were people that were offended by him as God's children, they should have been coming to him and being reconciled unto him.

The life of faith is not what you think it is. It's not what we've been taught it is. It's not this easy, roll along, God will bless you.

I had a preacher tell me one time, if you'll just do about half right and preach the gospel, God will bless you. God will bless you. What he meant was the church will grow and over in the Carolinas, those fundamental churches give their pastors cars and big houses to live in.

You know, that's God's blessing. And if you just do right and preach pretty good, God will bless you. That may be a curse.

I'll tell you what the blessing of God is. Being in the will of God, walking with him, hearing his voice, staying in fellowship with him, knowing his word, loving him, seeing miracles wrought because he's doing it through your life and in your life for his own glory, where only he can get glory out of your life. That is the life of faith.

And it might mean that you don't have anything. Can I say this to you? There is another day coming and this world is not all there is to it. Jesus said of those people who live by faith of whom the world is not worthy.

But there is another world. And in that world, they're not worthy to be there. And yet the Bible says they'll shine as the stars forever.

It's going to be a good time. It's going to be a good time when all the wrongs are made right. Everything that's upside down will be straightened up.

All the things that we can't straighten out here are straightened out. They're having a pretty good time over there right now. And by the way, it's just on the other side.

We see it through a glass darkly. It's I think every once in a while I can hear somebody laughing over there. Guys, this world's not what it's about.

This is not where your fulfillment is. Here we live by faith, not by sight. Then we'll see him as he is and we'll be like him.

And then it will be by sight. I love you. I thank God for letting me get to know you.

And I pray that you will pray for me and our ministry there in Kentucky and that God will use us just for his glory. And I'll pray for you. I appreciate Brother Tim.

We kind of renewed fellowship over at the conference in Texas up in Denton last spring. And I appreciate him and all that God's doing through this church and the other churches and pastors that I'm meeting. And I thank the Lord for having the privilege of being here.

Um, Brother Michael, where are you? Okay. Yeah.

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