

According to Your Faith

by Paris Reidhead

Faith is a work that requires effort, and it is demonstrated by trusting in God's promises and plans, even when it goes against the wisdom of the world.

Duration: 42:04

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for laborers in the harvest of God. He highlights how Jesus felt compassion for the multitude because they were like sheep without a shepherd. The preacher explains that faith involves picturing a desired goal in the mind and holding onto that image until it becomes ingrained in the unconscious. He encourages the congregation to start practicing faith with smaller things before moving on to bigger challenges. The preacher also mentions the story of the paralyzed man who was brought to Jesus by four individuals, emphasizing the importance of faith in healing.

Transcript

The scripture that was read for us is the scripture that we'll be considering this morning, and the text is found in that verse wherein the Lord Jesus spoke to the blind man, saying, according to your faith, be it unto you. Last week, as we considered faith for today, we discovered that faith is not a function of the emotions. You don't feel faith.

It's not a function of sensibilities. It's a function of the intellect, of course, because it rests on what we know of the character of God, the nature of God, who he is, and it is also a function of the will. Now, the reason why people don't repent, for instance, is a case in point, is not because they can't repent.

They've got all the equipment and everything's necessary to do it. They can change their mind. The reason they don't is not because they can't, because they choose not to, and the reason people don't believe is not because they can't believe, but because they choose not to believe.

It's a function of the intellect. It's a function of the will. Now, we have in this ninth chapter of the gospel of Matthew a very interesting statement.

Go back, if you please, to verse two. And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, The son be of good cheer, thy sins be

forgiven thee.

Jesus, seeing their faith, said, not according to thy faith be it unto you, but be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. And in verse 22 of this ninth chapter, and when Jesus turned and saw the woman who'd been diseased with the issue of blood twelve years, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort. Thy faith hath made thee whole.

And to the blind man he said, According to your faith be it unto you. He didn't always use the same phrase or the same expression, but all of them were similar in their intent. Now, I believe this ninth chapter of Matthew is extremely important for us at Trinity Alliance Church at the beginning of 1986 and at the time of this first annual meeting.

Because as the world of the Lord Jesus and the time he walked here was filled with human need, and there we have here these several, the man sick of the palsy, gyrus came whose daughter was dead, the woman with the issue of blood, the two blind men, the demon-possessed man. Those were just a few. We found in verse 35 that he went throughout all our villages teaching in their synagogues and preaching and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

There was no end of need in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. No end of need. All around him, on every hand, and he summarized this chapter by saying to his disciples, pray the Lord of the harvest that he'll send out laborers into the harvest.

Now, it's most interesting to me when I read that 36th verse to feel what the Lord Jesus felt, try to feel what he felt. When he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. We generally associate this with foreign mission, but this was not a foreign mission situation.

This was a home situation. The Lord Jesus was talking about the people that spoke the same language he did, had the same culture that he had, the people that lived in the villages neighboring to the ones where he stayed. He was talking about his own people.

Now, this does apply to the ends of the earth, but it's been said incorrectly, the light that shines the farthest ought to shine the brightest at its base. And if we're going to be concerned about Samaria, Judea, and the outermost part of the earth, we jolly well better be concerned about Jerusalem too, or else we are giving the light to the pretense of our concern for people we've never seen. If we can shut up the vials of compassion to the people around us who have need and concentrate on those whom we've never seen, we've turned missions away from obedience to the Lord to a hobby.

Some people collect stamps, some people collect antique rifles, and some people collect information about foreign countries. But those who've met the Lord Jesus are just as concerned about the people they can see as the ones about whom they read. And what I am hearing the Spirit of God say to my heart at the beginning of 1986 is that Fairfax County is a mission field, Arlington County is a mission field, Prince William County is a mission field, and the District of Columbia, no one would ever doubt that that Samaria is a mission field.

And my friends, we must understand that if we are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and partakers of his grace, we will recognize the need of the people around us who, like ourselves, live in homes, sleep between sheets, eat with silverware, talk our language, and are, as were those in the day of our Lord, sick

with the palsy, with the death in the family, with the issue of blood, with blindness, and with demon possession. And the same Lord who expressed concern and burden and interest to the people who came to him is the same Lord who dwells in us if we are partakers of his love and partakers of his grace. The need in your neighborhood, where you live, the people you know or could know is just as great as the people in the distant islands and distant continents.

We are here, we will send someone there, but the Lord Jesus has right to expect us to permit his Holy Spirit, he himself by the Holy Spirit, to be through us today as he was when he was here then. Now I want you to notice not only is there a world of need, but I want you to notice the word of compassion that we've had throughout this chapter. Let's go back to verses, verse two of the ninth chapter.

And behold, they, who are they? We don't know. I've lived my life under the tyranny of they. Have you? Someone comes to you and says, they say, and that used to make me tremble.

But my father once heard me as I complained about the fact that in my little world at the time that he was sort of the counselor to me, that they were saying, and I can hear him as he said, son, until you know their face, their name, and their address, pay no attention to what they say. Usually they is the excuse the individual reports it is using to escape from the responsibility for being said. Well, in this case, the they is noble rather than infuriating.

They brought to him a man sick of the false and seeing their faith. Who are they? We won't know until we get to his heaven. And I have a feeling that in that roster of the noble, the heroes of faith, you're going to find four people who picked up a man lying on a angry view of angry because we slept on them in the sedan.

Four sticks, just posts cut off of a tree with a hole in it, one top, one bottom, stick a stick through here, longer stick this way, sticks there, and then you weave rope over it. We called it in Arabic an angareeb. And that was the bed of the time.

Light, you could pick it up, you could carry it, put your roll out your your blanket or cloth on it and slept on it. Now, I see these four men picking up this angry with this man sick of a palsy and walking to where the Lord Jesus is. And he said, What are you doing this for? Look, I've been like this since I was a boy.

Why are you doing? I got cerebral palsy. I'm a spastic. All the rest that would go with it is protests.

And they're not asking him to believe. They're not saying your brother have faith. We know what they're doing.

They believe. They and they pick him up and they carry him and they set him down. And the Lord Jesus seeing their faith.

He never said one word to the fellow sick of a palsy. Didn't ask him if he had faith. Seeing their faith.

He said to the one who was sick of a palsy, Son be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. Then of course, Pharisees had to horn in. What right do you have to say that his sins are forgiven? And he replied.

He said, Was it any harder for me to say your sins are forgiven than it is to say, rise, take up your bed and walk, but that you know that I have the power to forgive sins. Rise, take up your bed and walk. And so the man gets up and goes.

Now, was it his faith? No. You have neighbors. You have friends.

You have people you've met are going to meet who are palsy. They're spiritual spastics. They have terrible need and they don't have any faith.

But you do. One of the things you can be in 1986 is an angry carrier. You can find the people that have need.

You don't have to ask them if they have any faith. You have it. There are those where your faith is going to be the answer to their need.

No, that isn't always the way, is it? No, of course, it's not always the way because we go down just a little further in the text and we find that the ruler is coming and he is saying, My daughter is dead already. Already. But I know that if you'll come, she'll live.

And so we have our own family and our own friends and those near to us and dear to us. The daughter doesn't have any faith. She doesn't have any, but that father does.

And he has faith enough even after they tell her that the daughter is dead. They have faith enough to go and find the Lord Jesus and say she's home and they tell me she's dead. But I know that if you'll come, she'll live.

So he starts to go to the home and there's a woman on the way whose we learned from another gospel has spent all that she has on the physician. She's exhausted her slender supply of funds and she's learned about the Lord Jesus and she sees him coming with the ruler and she's too timid to go to him and ask him, but her faith in him is such that she says, If I can just get close enough so that when he walks by the hem of his garment will pass through my fingers, I'll be healed. Please, excuse me.

Would you let me through, please? Could I get through, please? Would you mind if I... And she makes her way timidly to the inside of the path that's opening before him. And nobody pays any attention to this man, old woman. And as he comes, she snoops down and she reaches out and the cloth of his garment passes through her fingers.

And he stops and says, Has someone touched me? What do you mean, Lord? All these people knocking about, all of them reaching out and patting, what do you mean somebody touched you? No, someone touched me in faith. For I perceive that, and the King James translators bless their pure, their sweet, pusillanimous hearts. I don't blame them.

I'm just troubled, that's all. You know what they said? I perceive that virtue has gone out of me. Now, obviously virtue is something he has and we don't.

So it's different. But you know what the word is? Word is virtue. The word is dunamis, the word is power.

And do you know what he said that day before he left his disciples? He said, After that, the Holy Ghost has come upon me. You're going to receive what went out of me when the woman was healed of the issue of blood. You're going to receive power.

The very thing that went out of him to heal the woman is that which is to come upon us when we're filled with the Spirit of God. No wonder they said if Peter's shadow can fall on me, I'll be healed. And they laid themselves down along the walkways in the narrow alleys of Jerusalem so that when Peter moved, the

sun would be in such a way that just the shadow would touch him.

It was the shadow as it was to them as the hem of the garment was to the woman with the issue. God has so many different ways. Now two blind men, they see the Lord Jesus coming as he's going into the house of Jairus.

And they knock their way. They hear him. They don't see him.

They hear he was coming. They see with their minds that Jesus is. Who's that? That's Jesus.

And Jairus is with him. Take me to Jairus' house. And they make their way tapping down the street until they come to the place and force their way in to the Lord Jesus.

And they're taken to him. And the Lord Jesus said unto them, these two blind men, do you believe that I am able to do this? Can I do this that you're asking? Do you think that I can heal those eyes and make them see? Yes, we, yes. That's all just yea, Lord, yes.

And the Lord Jesus just touched their eye and said according to your faith, be it unto you. And they saw. And their eyes were open according to their, your faith, be it unto you.

They needed mercy. And he was the one whom they believed could be merciful. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, be mercy seeded to us. Lord, take care of our sin. That's what the mercy seed was because that's where the blood was sprinkled.

That's the cross. And their cry is, oh God, come in the flesh, be merciful, forgive us, cleanse us, pardon us, be merciful to us, mercy seeded to us. That's the word.

Be mercy seeded to us. And then, if he could be merciful, if he could forgive their sins, then couldn't he heal their eyes? Of course, they could say, yes, Lord. Why did they cry out for mercy? They weren't asking alms.

They were asking pardon. They were asking cleansing. They were asking forgiveness.

And now here's the last one in verse 32. And as they went out, behold, they as one group of them, the ones that have been with him in the house, the blind men and others, behold, they, another group, brought to him a dumb man possessed with the devil. They brought to him a dumb man possessed, demon possessed.

Oh, how many. I talked with a dear brother down in Dallas, Texas years ago. I had talked about the powers of demonism as we'd seen them in the Sudan.

And he was the head of a large mental institution in the Dallas area. And he said, he came to a lecture that I gave at Dallas Seminary following the Sunday services, because I was lecturing on demonism as we've now thought and knew about it in Africa. And he told me later, he said, there are so many cases in our institution which have no other explanation than demon possession.

Now, those of us that have had any experience with this are very, very careful about what we accuse of being that. We don't go around lightly attributing everything to a defeated foe. We are very careful about it.

But the point is that there are people around you, neighbors and friends, that are as this dumb man, have no capacity for faith, no ability to believe. It's just wasting your time to talk to them. Someone has to bring them, just as they had to bring the palsy man.

And you can be that way to bring them. Now, I want you to notice something else in closing. The work of faith.

Faith is described as a work. In John 6, 29, it says, this is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent. It's hard work to believe because it has nothing to do with the emotions.

It has to do with the will, has to do with the intellect, yes, that perceives, but the will that chooses to believe. And in 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 and verse 3, Paul writing to the church at Thessalonica said, remembering without ceasing your work of faith. It's work to believe.

Hard work to go against the religion of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. It's not easy. It's hard.

Do you know that in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 1, we read in the King James version, lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us. But the exact translation from the Greek is this, lay aside every weight and the sin which is in good standing. There's only one sin that I know of that's in good standing in religious circles.

That's the sin of unbelief. You come in a little tipsy, you're going to be church. You let too many checks bounce and you're going to be church.

But you can make a lifetime practice of unbelief and never have censure of the elders. And yet that's the sin that so easily besets us. I adjure you, I beg you not to think lightly of unbelief, but how much of our conversation has to do with it.

I've started listening to people wishing death. Oh, I just die, I'm so happy. Well, if they think not and doubt not in their heart, it'll be even as they say, goodbye, honey, you're off.

Has to do with death, has to do with failure, has to do with poverty, has to do with everything else. And that's in good standing. But to believe God, yay, God has said, that should never matter.

That's hard work. And you have to go against the tide. You have to go against the current when you believe God, because unbelief is popular.

No one's ever criticized. No one's ever called a fanatic for unbelief. He's criticized.

When he said, have you ever thought of Abraham? Have you ever thought of Abraham? I know why he's the father of the faithful. I'm certainly glad that it wasn't Gideon. Well, I'd have been troubled if Gideon had been the father of the faithful.

Well, here he is, an Israelite, and he's down in a pit, it's eight feet deep. They dug a pit, they put the grain in the pit, they covered it so the Midianites couldn't see it when they rode by. And at midnight, in the dark, they're down in the pit, throwing the grain up above the ground level so the wind will winnow it.

And then it quickly sinks below. And the shaft just blows along the ground, because they're only throwing it up about two feet above the top of the hole. And the angel of the Lord comes, and he sees Gideon down there, pitching grain.

And he says, oh, thou mighty man of valor, don't tell me the angels don't have a sense of humor to call that pusillanimous guy a mighty man of valor. And then he says, Gideon, God wants to use you. Boy, God had gotten down to the bottom of the barrel when he took Gideon, didn't he? I mean, he didn't have much to draw on, no more than he has with us, because most of us have been pretty much like Gideon.

But what happened was, he said, now God wants you to destroy the Midianites. And so Gideon said, oh boy, I better be sure of this. Now, Lord, if that's really you knocking and saying that, then tomorrow morning I want the ground wet with dew and the fleece dry.

So the next morning, sure enough, the ground was wet and the fleece was dry. But you know, you never, you never have faith quickened by sight. So he said, well, Lord, just to make really sure it's you, tomorrow morning I want the fleece to be wet and the ground dry.

So the next day he wrings the water out of the fleece, but the ground's dry. Man who had to walk by sight, not by faith. Not like Abraham.

God spoke to Abraham and said, Abraham, get thee up from your father's house and your kindred and go out and I'll make of you a great nation. So the first thing he did was go down to the carpenter's shop and get him to make a cradle. And when he took his family to leave, I have one camel has on the top of its load, this little old rocking cradle.

And from that time on, wherever Abraham went, I can see that cradle bobbing along on the ship of the desert as the camel carried him. Twenty-two and a half years later, a group of friends got a cheap bus ticket from her to go find Abraham. They wanted to visit him.

And they get over there and they meet and spend a couple of weeks with Abraham and they come back and they say, what'd you find out? Well, he's got a lot of hot blocks. We'll get a lot of sheep, a lot of camels, a lot of gold, but he's still mixed up. He's still Abel.

You know, when we move there, he's 97 and a half. Oh, go 97 and a half years old. And what's going along down there? There's that camel bobbing back and forth.

There's that cradle on the top of the camel. You'd think the guy after twenty-two and a half years would have sense enough to give up, wouldn't you? When you ask him and you say, Abraham, what in the world are you carrying that cradle for? God told me he's going to give me a son. That's for him.

Oh, listen. Don't you understand the work of faith? When you have to go against all the wise acres that got all the answers and you believe God. Whether anybody else does or not, you believe God.

No wonder it's called the work of faith. You know, you remember this, that when the Pharisees found out that Christ had something they didn't have, they either had to seek it or kill him. The world wasn't big enough for both of them.

And when they found out that you have something that they don't have, the religious people around you are either going to have to get a hold of what you've got, or they're going to have to have trouble getting rid of you, getting somehow getting away from you, because you're an embarrassment. Anyone who believes God is an embarrassment to the people who can rationalize it away. That's why it's called the victory of faith, because it's a battle and it's work.

In 1 John 5, verse 4, it says, Whosoever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Faith rests on two things, who he is and what he said. Who he is and what he said.

Now, that's all there is to it. There's nothing more. And you'd say, well, why don't we all, why don't we all believe then? Because we don't know how.

That's what I want to have us learn together is how, how faith functions. It's a function of the way he made us. Now, faith, did you, I told you last week, isn't it, the only thing over which you have total power is your mind.

God didn't give you power over what you hear, what you smell, what you feel, only what you think. Now, faith is the decision that you make in your will to vividly picture in your mind a desired goal or an objective, vividly. I've had people come for counseling about their children or husbands or their wives, and what they, when they finish praying, you know, if the people weren't in trouble, they would be when they finished praying because it's so negative.

When you pray for someone, don't see them the way they are. See them the way they're going to be. When the prayer is answered, you're praying for the sick.

Don't see them the way they are. Set your will to see them as they're going to be when God has done what you're asking him to do. So let's go back to it.

Faith consists in the decision of the will to vividly picture in your mind the desired goal or the objective, and to hold that image in your mind until it seeps down into your unconscious mind, until it becomes part of you, until it comes in, down, inside of you. You see, your minds are like icebergs. We got one-ninth of it up here in the cerebral area where we can decide and choose and recall, and then eight-ninths of it down underneath, under, beneath, where all is stored, all the memories stored.

And it's to seep down that picture. For instance, here's a case in point for practice. I just found out today that we need here at Trinity Alliance Church \$850 every Sunday to meet our budget.

Now, why not begin with that? \$850. See it, see it in, see it there, see it beginning to go beyond that so that many other think as a corporate group. Picture it, see it.

That desired objective, let it seep into, or hold it in your mind until it seeps down deep inside. Now, it's based on our confidence in the character and the promises of God. My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

So when we back that picture that we have by prayer, and then the little key, it unlocks it. Thanking God for it when we ask before it's received. Don't wait till it comes to thank him.

Thank him now for it. Thank him for it. Now, let me repeat this because I want you to get it.

Faith consists of the decision of the will to vividly picture in your mind a desired goal or objective, and holding that image until it seeps down into your unconscious. It works with confidence we have in the promises of God, in the character of God. It's backed by our prayers and by that little marvelous key that unlocks.

Thanking God. Now, we better practice on the little things. Don't go to moving mountains, shall we, for a while.

I wouldn't want to have any mountains moved for a little time. Let's get a little place, and don't cast any trees into the sea. How about working on \$850 a week? How about working on the need for your children and your neighbors and your friends? We'll start with the smaller things, like blind people, palsy people, people that have need around us, and we'll work up to mountains and trees.

I don't have any question about it. I just don't think you want to start early. We ought to be finished.

Let's start with that. Get a little practice. Vividly seeing the answer until it seeps down with it.

Backing it with prayer, with thanksgiving. Father, we ask thee now to seal thy word to our hearts and help us to live and to walk to work until we hear the Lord Jesus speaking to our hearts according to your faith, according to your faith. The picture you have of the object, the object of your desire and your prayer, that for which you've asked, see it.

We believe, Lord, the blind men saw themselves seeing if they could just get to Jesus. The woman saw herself healed of the issue of blood if she could touch his car. Those who brought the palsy man saw him walking home carrying his bed if they could just get to him according to their faith, so it was.

Move upon us, Lord, as a people that are going to be circulating and moving among people that have great needs, that we can bring them to him and him to them, that those needs might be met. We ask him in thanksgiving in Jesus' name. Amen.

As we take our hymnals and turn number 307, 307 verses one and two of 307. Stand together as we sing. My faith looks up to thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine.

Now hear me while I pray, Take all my guilt away, All let me from this day be holy thine. May thy rich grace impart Strength to my fainting heart, my zealous fire, as thou hast. Oh, may my love to thee, pure, warm, and changeless be.

This morning, following the morning service and after a little break time, we will be having our annual meeting. Everyone is welcome to observe, to be a part. It is primarily for the members of the church, but everyone is welcome.

This is your church home. This is where you contribute and pray and worship. You have a full right to know what we do and you're welcome to share and to see and to ask questions that you might get those questions answered.

Let us pray. Precious Heavenly Father, we thank you for the morning message and as we learn to trust thee and reach out by faith to you, I pray that thou will help us day by day to trust you for growing aspects and larger things. Bless us now as we're scattered and I also pray that thou will have your hand upon our first annual meeting as we begin to lay the course of where we should go, who should be elected, and all we pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

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