

Growing Faith

by Prabhudas Koshy

Growing faith requires a deep trust in God's word and a willingness to obey Him, rather than just seeking outward signs and wonders.

Duration: 40:57

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:35, Mark 16:15, Luke 17:6, John 4:46-54, Romans 10:14

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his observations from attending a World Charismatic Convention where famous charismatic preachers gathered to preach. He mentions a young man on a wheelchair who attended every night, hoping to be healed. However, despite the preacher's promises of miracles, the young man remained paralyzed. The speaker then shares his own experience as a pastor, starting with only eight members and growing to 15 over five years. He emphasizes the importance of genuine faith and repentance, cautioning against seeking miracles without heeding God's truth. The speaker also acknowledges that God can still perform miracles and shares examples of amazing transformations he has witnessed in his own life and ministry.

Transcript

Would you please turn your Bibles to the Gospel of John, chapter 4. John's Gospel, chapter 4. And we shall read from verse 46 to verse 54. Verse 46 of John 4. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain noble man, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The noble man saith unto him, Sir, come down, or my child die.

Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth.

And himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did when he was come out of Judea into Galilee. I want to talk to you this morning from this text on the topic of growing faith.

Faith is a topic that is dear to every heart in a Bible believing church like this. Nonetheless, it's a topic people have often misunderstood, misapplied, and a topic that is wrongly expounded from many pulpits. Some time ago when I was attending a World Charismatic Convention, not that I was part of it, I went to observe, and it was held in Kailang Stadium in Singapore.

Thousands and thousands gathered for four nights of preaching by famous charismatic preachers from around the world. A young man on a wheelchair was pushed in. Every night he was there.

I attended three nights, the last three nights, and he came to the same place with the help of some of his friends. He was paralyzed from the shoulder downward. The preacher will talk about great miracles that he performed elsewhere, and will announce that the Holy Spirit just told him that he's going to come down and heal everybody here.

The young man will stretch up his hands, start praying, Jesus, Jesus, heal me, heal me. Now, who doesn't want to be healed, especially a young man of that age? And the so-called healers, the volunteers, will come around, lay their hands on the man, and shake him up, and they are speaking in so-called tongues, and say the Holy Spirit is going to heal them. And they said, he must believe.

He said, yes, I believe. Nothing happened. So they said, tomorrow you must come, but with more faith.

He came. He was agonizing in prayer, at least he appeared to be. Three nights went by, nothing happened.

The final thing they said to him is this, look, you don't have enough faith. I was very angry, but I can't do anything. If he had no faith, why did he come? Why did he pray? To them, faith will surely heal.

If you are not healed, there is no faith. That's ridiculous. Yes, prayer with faith can heal, if God so will.

But God will not administer to us something that he doesn't want to give to us. Whatever God gives is the best. We often sing songs of a blind lady named Fanny Crosby.

She has written more than 4,000 hymns and songs, including the favorite hymns like, Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine. Jesus never healed her blind eyes. But God gave her an eyesight that goes beyond the sight of open eyes.

And she saw the Savior. She was deeply convinced within her heart, by faith, of course by faith, that Jesus loves her. And so she sang, This is my story.

This is my song. What a blessed assurance. Today it is my prayer, that we will go beyond the physical experiences that we often crave to have.

And our faith will go beyond this earthly realm, to see a resurrected Savior, who died for us on the cross. And now lifted high, gloriously seated on the right hand side of the Father, interceding for you and me. Whether we are sick or in good health, whether we are rich or poor, He still prays for you if you have trusted Him.

And prepares a home, which no man can take away. He will bring to you, and He will take you to that place as well. I pray that this faith will find its deep roots within our hearts.

One day all of us have to leave this world, in His appointed time. The Bible tells us, It is appointed unto man once to die, and then judgment. So you can't change that appointment.

By the way, we may often fail to keep our appointments. We may be not very good in keeping our appointments. But this one appointment, whether you like it or not, whether you deliberately try to postpone, you can never miss.

That's your death, and my death. We must be prepared for it. Death will not destroy our faith, but help us to realize the fullness of faith.

Nonetheless, in this world as we live, we struggle with sickness, we struggle with sickness of our dear ones, we will struggle with poverty, we will struggle with all sorts of problems, that we don't even want to imagine at this point of time. Trouble is waiting at the corner. Right? Nobody can escape that.

So how are we going to face these troubles? How are we going to live through these struggles? The answer is by faith. Let's take a look at the way the Lord established a noble man in His faith, and brought the rest of the family to Christ through faith. Now, first of all, I want to tell you that there is a kind of faith that I would like to call superficial faith.

There are people who tend to show that they have a lot of faith. Lots and lots of faith. They talk as though they are full of believing.

They talk as though they are never touched by fear or anxiety or anything of that sort. Though they gumble the whole day long in their heart, when they see somebody else they say, praise the Lord. Though they have a moody face in the house, see somebody else in the church, they will say, oh, happy I am, rejoice in the Lord.

But deep down their heart, they have no faith, they have no assurance, they have no commitment to the Lord, but when they see ten people, they want to show they have faith. There are people like that. Let's look at the text now and see the superficial faith that Jesus rebuked.

Verses 45 to 49, or rather 46 to 49. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. That was the first miracle our Lord did.

And there was a certain noble man. Now the word noble man means a king's officer. He was an officer of the king that ruled the Galilee region.

And then we read further, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him and besought him that he would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, except easy signs and wonders he will not believe.

Interestingly, you notice in verse 48 that from the third personal pronoun he suddenly changes to a second personal pronoun which is in plural, he. Not thou, you by he, plural. This noble man came to Jesus, but he was not alone.

There was a group of people around him. They all came down. But they came down with the purpose of seeing more miracles being performed by Christ.

Jesus was in Cana before and he did a tremendous miracle. I believe the story went around the town and beyond the village and town. Maybe into other parts of the Palestinian area.

People who came to the wedding said, oh, you know, what a poor thing. They didn't have enough wine. But there was this man called Jesus.

He did something spectacular. He gave a barrel of wine at the end of the wedding. And this is amazing.

And I heard someone saying, you know, he asked the people to draw water from the well and carry the water. By the time they scooped out the water it became wine. This is amazing.

And they started to hear other stories of Christ's miraculous works. And so when Jesus appeared in this place, people gathered around. Even the normal men came because of the things that he heard from others, that Jesus can heal.

They did not really believe. They pretend to believe. Jesus knew their heart and immediately said, accept ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe.

We do know it's the people who have received so much blessings, so much merciful blessings from the Lord that put him on the cross finally. Today we hear about power evangelism. It's become an entertainment altogether.

Churches are crowded with thousands and thousands of people who are not even touched by the gospel. They live in utter sin, without repentance. They follow the world like the whales that we see everywhere.

They live in carnality. But on Sunday, they will raise their hands and praise God. They swing according to the rhythm of the music.

They claim they believe. They believe. They believe.

They claim to have miracles. Sometimes nothing happens. Sometimes some things do happen.

People come for miracles. Everywhere when so called miracles are advertised people gather by millions. When there is simple preaching, couldn't be bothered.

It affects my life. It's straight talking. It cuts through my heart.

It breaks my heart and my conscience. But if somebody from the pulpit God loves you all because you came in. No matter what, God loves you.

Just carry on as you are. The Lord is going to bless you. Very nice feeling.

But if the preacher says a sinner, the axe is laid on the tree. Unless you repent. Oh, oh please.

This old fashioned, keep it. We have people who can entertain us every Sunday morning. We'd rather go there.

I want you to carefully think about this. We are not against miracles that happen. God can do miracles.

But please good health and more money doesn't guarantee you the kingdom of God. Unless you repent and believe. The first thing the Lord did to the noble man and the people around him which gathered was

not to say good to see you this morning.

God bless you all. No. That's not what he did.

The first thing was confronting the unbelief. Confronting the superficial faith and correcting them. That was the first thing our Lord did.

Maybe you are confronted this morning. Look into your hearts. Why do you want to be a Christian? Why do you claim that you are following Christ? Is it for more money? Some people have seen even pastors like me who filled a pulpit have found this one of the best ways to make money.

Church has become a money making enterprise. Musicians have found this to be a money making enterprise. Choreographers dance everywhere so artists can make money.

We are following Christ. The son of man came to this world and he said foxes have holes, birds have nest but the son of man have no place to lay his head. But here preachers and pastors are making money out of so called faith movement.

Jesus warned us. Some of us are familiar with this verse in Matthew 24 which talks about the signs of the last days before our Lord returns. Let me read to you.

For there shall arise false Christs, false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders. Mind you, Jesus never said they will just pretend. They will do great wonders and signs.

In so much that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. There is no lack of wonder movement. Signs and wonders.

That's the catchphrase of every ministry that pops up here and there. No lack of it. Everywhere we have it.

I want to read another portion from the Scriptures. Listen to this. 2 Thessalonians 2 8-10 And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

He is talking about the Antichrist. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan. Now watch this.

With all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. They receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. Signs and wonders.

They are plenty. And the Lord is not impressed. Matthew 7 warns us through Jesus words that Matthew recorded that on that day Jesus will say I don't know you.

Even though some would say oh in your name we cast out devils. We did wonderful works. He said I don't know you workers of iniquity.

Now dear friends it's something that you must take heed. If you are going to say I'm going to follow Christ because I can do more miracles and more miracles and more miracles so called signs and wonders without giving heed to his truth that calls you to repentance and genuine faith. Then you may be deceiving yourself.

I have no doubt that the Lord can do some miraculous things that happens in our life to turn our hearts toward Him. God can do amazing things. I'm seeing God's wonderful deeds everyday in my life in my church ministry and everywhere.

Some of the things that I see is just breathtaking how the Lord changes people who have been in drug addiction for 20 years people who have been temple mediums and lawn sharks and gangsters, prisoned in Singapore prison for 10 years 2 or 3 times time after time they were locked up but now by the preaching of the gospel being delivered from all those their wives left them their children were taken away from them because they were seen as aggressive violent people now you see God has changed them healed them so marvelously that the Lord even allowed their wives, estranged wives to bring back their children and say now you look after our children and they rejoice. These are miracles. I do see them.

I myself have received so many of God's miraculous healing in my life I have very bad gastric problems from time to time. Sometimes after a week of hard work I feel very tired and vomiting sensation and all that and I'm getting ready on Sunday to preach. It gets very bad and I will ask the Lord to have mercy so that I can have enough strength to stand at the pulpit and preach and do you know what? When I go up, I don't know where my sickness goes everything goes.

I preach the sermon for one hour and then I walk out. The Lord does miracles I don't doubt it but look what if He doesn't do? Will we deny the Lord?

Come back again to the text look at the faith the real faith which grows steadily from verse 50 to 54 I'm going to read verse 49 The noble man saith unto him Sir, come down e'er my child die Jesus saith unto him Go thy way, thy son liveth and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him and he went his way and as he was now going down his servants met him and told him saying, Thy son liveth then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend or to be healed or to get better and they said unto him yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him so the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him Thy son liveth and himself believed and his whole house now here you see the man exercising his faith but interestingly before we really fathom the

depth of this man's faith and and the energy that faith had in growing up we want to look at how it grew up please look at verse 49 where he said Sir, come down lest my child die he called the Lord Jesus to go with him this is not the first time he asked Jesus to go down with him look at verse 47 in the middle of it you read he besought him that he would come down and heal his son so twice the noble man asked Jesus to go down with him to his house I was wondering what was in his mind maybe he said as a noble man he has a lot of respect and now he has one of the most powerful religious man around him and walk down the road all the people will look in awe maybe a big crowd will come to his house and then Jesus would heal and it would be wonderful to have Jesus in my house but the Lord was

not so willing to go down to his house a man's religion is not established by outward things that we see and observe it first of all begins with a man's deep rooted faith in Christ even if Christ would go to this noble man's house and he would not exercise faith his religion is in vain but if Christ has decided not to go to his house but the man would go back with faith in Christ he will be greatly blessed the pastor of this church Reverend Timothy To a godly man who got raised and had been faithful for so many years even if he comes to your house it does not confirm your faith it's possible and it's quite commonly seen that people would like to have pastors and elders coming to the house no matter how they live they don't repent from the adultery they don't repent from the drunkenness

they don't live a life that is clean and holy before the Lord but they love to have the leaders of the church filling the living room it does no good my friends it does no good you may put a plaque in the living room Christ is the head of the house and a silent listener to every conversation what an abomination if in that house you live in sin and there is no faith Jesus wanted this man to understand what true faith is so the Lord insisted you go I'm not coming now if some of those charismatic friends who told the young man that he had no faith remember the story I told you at the beginning listen to this he said oh oh I think Jesus know his heart the noble man had no faith that's why he doesn't want to go maybe the charismatic preachers who told the young man you know you go back God has

no mercy on you because you have no faith would tell the noble man hey look Jesus doesn't want to go with you that means you have no faith no the man already exercises faith the Lord was now working to enhance that faith to make it grow do you want to know what a true faith that grows is all about look carefully Jesus said verse 50 go thy way thy son liveth and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him the man believed the words that Jesus had spoken real true growing faith has this essential characteristic that it will live and thrive on the word of God it feeds on God's word and believes every word that Jesus utters not a jot or tittle shall pass away he believes everything that God has commanded go thy way thy son liveth how do we know that his faith was real because he

believed and went his way true faith is an obedient faith true faith take God at his word without doubting and say Lord not my will but thine be done and heals himself totally in Romans 10 14 we read this manner what Paul wrote to the Romans how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard how shall they hear without a preacher now Paul never said how would people believe if nobody goes around and do some power evangelism Paul never said how would people believe if we cannot do miracles Paul said how would they believe if we don't preach where is the preacher we thank God for Farrington Bible College that God has raised and kept by his grace where men and women are trained to preach the word we don't teach them any

gimmicks on the pulpit we have no course on how to manipulate the crowd and get them to swing and sing according to the rhythm of the musicians so that an emotional wave can be created in the minds of the people and they are lulled into spiritual sleep and deadness then by the preaching of the preacher awakening the souls to repent and believe faith is created by the preaching of God's word that's God's appointed means in bringing faith in the hearts of the people not other gimmicks my friends today what the world lacks is true good faithful firm bold preachers we have too many entertainers everywhere people want to be there because they are never rebuked about their sin or superficial faith they are encouraged to continue as they are because God loves them that's the message these are

the last days before our Lord Jesus returns we are repeatedly warned by our Lord Jesus himself that people will increase in sin people will be like the time of Noah what was the time of Noah do you know that for 120 years that man preached and preached and preached and preached as he made the ark people laughed at him after 50 years of preaching they said oh this poor old man preached 50 years no rain must be mad 100 years gone by there is a confirmed mad still preaching rain is coming 119 years mind who can change this fellow just ignore they all ignored him 120 years up the rain came down the floods went up the door of the ark was shut we are living in a time when preaching is despised honoring God's word to every letter of it is seen as something ridiculous and extreme as long as we

entertain the crowd as long as we can move the whole world into the church auditorium we should be happy but no no no that's not the way faith is generated that's not the way the faith is edified and

strengthened and nurtured it's by the word of the Lord when he rebukes for my superficial faith for my immature faith through his word I repent and say oh Lord forgive my lack of faith increase my faith help me to trust you not in the things of the world but in your word man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God today pastors are in the business of making bread feeding people with wealth and health nothing wrong about it but before that care for the souls please we are justified by faith true faith let's keep looking into the text see how the

faith grew verse 50 see Jesus saith unto him God I wear thy son liveth and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him and he went his way verse 51 and as he was now going down his servants met him and told him saying thy son liveth the power of God's word many years ago when I was pastoring my church I had only about 15 people I started with 8 people preaching to 8 people then after 5 years the church grew to 15 it's a tremendous growth some people laugh at me I know you laughed it's alright and one salesman came by to sell a photostating machine to me and he is a charismatic Christian and we had a good chat he said Pastor Koshi how many members do you have?

I said 15 15? I said yes. How long have you been a pastor? I said about 5 years 5 years? 15 people? oh then he asked me do you pray that the church will grow? I said yes I do pray and that no growth? I said not no growth of course from 8 to 15 is a growth but it's not a growth for him it must be spectacular big crowd then it's growth you see and then he said to me the next thing look I think something is wrong with you I said what is it sir? you pray and then your church is not growing you know my pastor started this church 2 years ago and suddenly it became 400 people so I think you know something wrong with you.

I said what's wrong? well James says the prayer of a righteous man availeth much you prayed and nothing happened that means you are not a righteous man so that pastor who has 400 people is more righteous than me reason I don't have as many people as he has I'm not righteous thank God for God's word you see so I said do you read the Bible? he said yes. I said do you know who was the man whom Peter called the preacher of righteousness you know who it was?

Noah Noah is referred to as the preacher of righteousness and I said Noah preached for 120 years he got how many people? except him 7 all together 8 was he a righteous man or not? no according to his standard he is not I said thank God I have more people than Noah got Noah had only 8 people I have 15 people now people start to measure Christianity like this how about missionaries who went to preach gospel in man eating tribes and before they preached a sermon they were killed and eaten did they have faith? were they righteous? oh no no no no no they were not righteous you see the kind of thinking that people had you go to Bible schools you attend seminars you go to churches where you are constantly taught faith means big crowd faith means wellness and wealth if you suffer for Christ if

you bear the cross if you preach the truth and people shun you oh you are the worst of preachers around well no mistake make no mistake my friends we are living in the time of Noah like the days of Noah truth is denied reproached they go for exciting stuff now here this man did not reach the home before that the Lord started working I want to tell you in my life also the Lord started working I saw with my own eyes how the Lord blessed the preaching of the gospel and many have come to know the Lord I don't want to talk about how many people we have and all that that's not the issue the issue is this if you preach the word of God just as the Lord has spoken and preach with a statement and thus said the Lord there is no way it can be subdued by the powers of hell gates of hell cannot conquer

it the Lord will accomplish his will through the preaching of the gospel how can man believe if there is no preacher faith cometh by the hearing and we have no doubt we keep preaching and half way through in our life we will hear good news the Lord is working well and we I want to end by looking at verse 52 then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend or get better and they said unto him yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him so the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him thy son liveth and himself believed and his whole house himself believed he already believed that's why he went down at Jesus word but now he believed again what does that mean now this is the beauty of faith faith has to exercise itself every time because sometimes

there will be trials when our faith will be pushed back but we believe again and there will be times like this when the Lord does miraculous things to deliver us and to provide our needs and we believe him again we reaffirm our faith our faith grows every minute every moment when I look back in my own life I see so many times I could have been dead but the Lord somehow spared my life and now I believe him for he loved me and given me another opportunity to repent and dedicate myself to serve him and my faith is increased by his unfailing mercies and goodness toward me and my family and to my church every day so it should be when you see God's good hand in somebody's life what do you say thank you Lord thou art great oh how great thou art increase my faith when the Lord give you another

meal and he gives you power to eat another meal what do you say thank you Lord you teach us to pray give us this day our daily bread and you gave it I believe in you again I trust you again may dear friends you grow every day but remember the essential characteristics of real faith it will repent when it is rebuked and it follows every word that the Lord has uttered and that's our victory in time to come

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