

# Keep Your Faith in the Faithful God

by Santosh Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and trust in God, highlighting the need to destroy speculations and thoughts that go against the knowledge of God, to fight the good fight of faith in our minds, and to seek God's approval above all earthly desires. It encourages believers to walk by faith, not by sight, and to trust in God's wisdom and power, even when facing trials and challenges.*

**Scripture:** Hebrews 11:13, 2 Corinthians 10:3, Hebrews 11:39, Hebrews 11:6, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Hebrews 11:2, Hebrews 11:6, James 3:15

**Topics:** "Faith in Trials", "Trusting God's Wisdom"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I hope we paid attention to the memory verses and we're excited that our children say it but also I think one of the benefits of hearing it so many times is that it sinks in and I don't know what your experience is like when I sit there and I'm listening all of a sudden like the eighth time something hits I got something that happened again take courage son your sins are forgiven I've heard that verse before I know it intellectually but something happened when I was sitting there just now take courage there's nothing you have to face that you can't face with courage and Jesus is holding his hand out to you as it were if I was holding out my hand and offering you a thousand dollars I think none of us loves money so we will all be very holy we will sit in our chairs and say no thanks but most people in the world with like thousand dollars here Jesus is saying take courage I give you courage take it you want courage today you want courage this week he wants to give it to you no situation that we don't have to walk in courage and I was also thinking with our memory verse behold I will do something new a roadway in the wilderness and rivers in the desert what do you think it takes to see a river in the desert what do you think it takes to see a roadway in the wilderness I'd like to speak on that actually it's interesting that that's our verse for this week you need faith and I found that often you have to in a sense close your eyes from the wilderness and close your eyes from the desert in order to see the river in order to see the roadway and so often our eyes our earthly eyes are open we're seeing the wilderness we're seeing the desert we're living by our senses we're living with our physical eyes so taken up by that so affected by what we see what we hear what we feel

what we taste we're so taken up with that that we miss the roadway we miss the the river that's why that verse in 2nd Corinthians 5 let's turn there maybe I'll begin that with that verse 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 as you know is the verse most people know verse 17 it's a good verse that's often used to tell people after they're born again you're a new creation 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 17 a new thing old things are passed away behold all things have become new 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 17 but that's not just oh you were on your way to hell now you're on your way to heaven you never read that phrase in the Bible you read about heaven but that is just because I want to be with God and that's where he is that's what heaven is for me but God says you can be with me now here on this earth so all things have become new what things you'll find that there are many things but one of the things he talks about in verse 7 which is easy for us to miss and I know I missed it for many years one of the things that should become new when I am in Christ behold if anyone is in Christ verse 17 he is a new creature the old things passed away behold new things have come now another one I just want to mention in passing is verse 16 we know no man after the flesh and yet you have so many Christians today whose allegiance is to their family to their husbands or wives or brothers or sisters or children and their family churches as a family unit you try to build a church no once you're in Christ I know no man after the flesh not my wife not my children my brother sister father mother I love them but I know them in Christ and Jesus said that's the first condition of discipleship you cannot love your fleshly relations more than me I know no man after the flesh verse 16 that's one thing that should become new before I was in Christ my attachment was and by flesh it doesn't just mean relatives also it could be my personal preferences of the kind of people I like to hang out with has that changed since you got to know Christ do you like to hang out with a certain group of people who like the same things as you are cultured like you are or speak the same language as you do not in our case we all speak English but in some other countries it's you got language churches and language cliques and language communities religious Christian communities I don't want to call them Christian communities because there's no such thing as a Christian community it's Christ that's the community so but verse 7 is what I wanted to us to see one of the things that should become new when I am in Christ that is I do not walk by sight we walk by faith not by sight not by what I see not by appearance my margin says that's the literal translation not by the appearance of it I was convicted I've been convicted over the last few weeks which is why I wanted to speak on that today how much the Lord has shown me that I still live by appearances I still find that I judge people by appearances I think if you were to be honest pause for a moment and think about how you think about people the appearance that we see has an immediate effect on our assessment of who they are and what they must be like I see how they're dressed or what they look like or how they talk the appearance has that become new dear brother dear sister if you're in Christ are you walking by faith not by sight now looking at others is one thing but what about circumstances that's the area that really has been convicting me recently that I tend my relationship with Christ for many years I thank God that he's brought me into a deeper life where it's not so much the case anymore but it used to be as a Christian that my day how my day went or how my week went or how my month went or how my year went was determined by my the appearance of things how things looked to me oh the company's downsizing I'm probably gonna lose my job or oh this so-and-so did this to me or oh so and so said that or this other person treated me this way and that had a way of affecting me much more than it should have if I am really in Christ walking by faith living by faith not by sight and I've been making it the habit of my life to close my eyes in a sense not physically I have to walk on this earth but as I see things with my eyes I put a filter in front of it when I hear news or when I see things or I see things happening the world around me there's a filter that I now put in front of my eyes when I read news on the computer or I get a text message or hear something or see something else there's a filter now if anyone is in Christ you can say there's a filter that says I refuse to see this as one who is not in Christ I refuse to see this based on the appearance

of things now I see it by faith now I've got my faith glasses on all of a sudden it changes my perspective that's what it means to be in Christ if anyone is in Christ he's a new creation the old way of oh oh this is gonna happen that's gonna happen oh the doctor's report and this medical report and my child that happened or this is going on and they said that about me or my reputation or how am I gonna have enough saved up and that's the old Santos passed away died and a new Santos exists Christ living in him who says I refuse to look at things by the appearance of him but by faith we walk by faith not by sight see I I think I always knew the walk by faith part I didn't realize that to really walk by faith you had to make a choice to not walk by sight that's become a truth for me more recently I a few weeks ago I think was three weeks ago I talked about the narrow gate the narrow way and I wanted to finish that message on and I might take another one yet but today on another guardrail on this narrow way it's a narrow way but it's important for us to have guardrails on it so that we stay on the narrow way you know I I don't know if you've seen drawings of pilgrims progress I'm sure you have but one of the scenes where pilgrims walk in this narrow way you see it's sort of like a narrow way with a cliff on both sides and I think that's true to some extent but I think the appearance of it is that there's a narrow way and beside it is a wide pasture in other words I think if you saw that was a cliff you would you would make sure you don't fall off but what's on the other side and on both sides is a wide broad way Jesus contrast the narrow way with the broad way and I believe that the broad way is on both sides of the narrow way and the devil's constantly trying to get us to say hey why do you have to take your Christian life so seriously why be so sold out for the Lord why be so radical in living for him and his interest alone why not you know yeah still go to church and have your your your nice little Bible studies and your nice little prayer meetings and and your nice little family and and walk this broad way on this side or on the other side and it's it's easy for us to stray off the narrow way and be walking the broad way and not even know it that's what I've realized and it's not like a cliff where you fall down all of a sudden all the way to the bottom it's just oh yeah I'm walking alongside there's somebody else who attends the same church as I do or there could be even my husband or wife walking alongside me and here I am walking the broad way right next to them and he or she's walking the narrow way Jesus said two will be laying in a bed one will be taken one would be left behind two would be in the field one would be taken one would be left behind why because the one left behind was walking the broad way right next to the one walking the narrow way in the same bed he's talking about a husband and wife so let's take that to heart it's a it's a narrow way and that's why I want to talk about these guardrails however I think in my if I was to think about it for many years I thought the guardrails were I gotta grit my teeth and grab onto the steering wheel and make sure I don't go off and I hold on tight and all of a sudden my hands are sweating because I'm gripping it so tight you know sometimes I have to drive like that we we had to drive over the rapid year pass last weekend it was snowing and we didn't have four-wheel drive and I was clenching the wheel it's not it's not easy that's not the Christian life though but it was for me for many years oh I'm gonna slip I'm going to no it's not and I hope you remember the guardrail I talked about last last time and that is keep yourself in the love of God God loves you we sang about that today he will hold you fast trust him that's the verse in Jude keep yourself in the love of God that must be that first guardrail keep yourself in the love of God the second one I'd like you to see well before I do that I want you to read a verse and with me in Luke chapter 13 you know the verse in Matthew 7 where Jesus talked about the narrow gate and the narrow way but there's a phrase he uses here that he doesn't use in that other place that really stood out to me Luke 13 verse 23 someone said to him Lord are there just a few who are being saved Luke 13 verse 23 Jesus we did read that verse in Matthew 7 the way to life is narrow and few there be that find it and this parallel passage here in Luke 13 somebody asked him Lord is it only a few it sounds like you're preaching such a high standard and I see a lot of other very moral upright people around me are you saying that only a few are going to be saved now it's interesting Jesus didn't actually answer that

question but he did say something that we in answer to that that is very important for us to see and that is verse 24 strive to enter through the narrow door for many I tell you will seek to enter and will not be able to strive to enter now you might think strive okay I got to go to the gym and work out strive no I like a paraphrase of this verse that reads give it your full attention that's what striving is that means strive in your thoughts and your affections to make sure that you're focused on this give this your full attention give this your full attention and you will make it through the narrow gate if your heart is half-hearted if you've got your heart somewhere else your interest in some other things you want Jesus plus something you may not enter the narrow gate you read in Matthew 19 of a man a very upright righteous man who wanted God plus something else wanted God plus something else and he's I think he's in hell today the rich young ruler we know him Jesus said you must you must give this your full attention because he came to Jesus and said Lord I'm obedient I keep all the commandments I love the Lord my God with all my heart strength I love my neighbor as myself I give to the poor and I'm generous I'm what else must I do there's a vacuum inside of me and Jesus said you lack one thing you must give up everything that's the one thing you lack you must give this your full attention that may be the word that some of us need to hear today you lack one thing in your Christian life you haven't given Jesus your full attention you haven't given this narrow way walking with Jesus your full attention I want to tell you I am seeking to do that and yet I'm a man with a job I have a job that I do every day and I have family to take care of I have needs that must be met I have personal needs family needs all of those things and yet God is showing me a way by which I can give him my full attention and yet meet the needs that he wanted the work that he wants me to do see this is the life that God wanted Adam to have in the Garden of Eden he said go take care of the garden you've got trees to take care of animals to name and all that but Adam let me be your full attention while you're naming the lion think about me while you're taking care of that tree think about me while you're doing that other thing while you're hanging out with Eve think about me give me your full attention and you'll find that I will give you the grace for everything that you need to do God gave Adam and Eve a work to do he's given us a work to do but he's also shown us a way by which we can give him our full attention so I talked about keeping ourselves in the love of God let's turn to 1st Timothy chapter 1 another guardrail on this narrow way is this faith a faith that we fight for he says in 1st Timothy 1 verse 18 now look at the solemn words in a sense that Paul is writing to Timothy with this command I entrust to you it's kind of like Paul's got this like a father giving his inheritance to one son he's got one son he's giving it all to him I'm entrusting it to you Timothy what was it a ministry yes but a responsibility a way of living your life Paul said to the Philippians that Timothy had the interest of Christ unlike any other of Paul's co-workers and so Paul says listen Timothy I've got a lot of other people they're nice you know they're wonderful but I got a responsibility for you I'm entrusting it to you if somebody with a lot of money came to you and said hey I'm entrusting this to you keep this safe what would you do he would keep it safe this is Paul's words to Timothy Timothy I'm entrusting this to you in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you that by them you would fight the good faith fight fight the good fight keeping faith this is the fight that we're called to fight this is the striving that we must have it's not a I need to be better or I need to do this more off or I need to get up and spend two hours in the Bible or spend an hour in prayer and all no strive to keep your faith strive to preserve how much you trust God and his goodness and his faithfulness strive fight the good fight to keep faith this is what Paul entrusted to Timothy in a sense he told Timothy Timothy if you keep faith it'll all go well with you yeah the ministry yeah watching over the churches all these other things God will take care of that he will guide you Timothy you'll have to be an overseer now to churches after I've gone how are you gonna do it fight the good fight keep the faith keep the faith and he shows us a little bit in the previous verses of what this faith can be based on and I want you to see a few things here he says in verse 17 to the king eternal immortal and this is the first thing out this is the first basis of our

faith God is eternal and immortal that means he rules time yesterday today forever it's all the same the future listen to this the future is as certain to God as the past is to us would you say that's a known fact that Santos was born on April 3rd 1973 that's a known fact you have your birthday or it's a known fact that yesterday that such-and-such happened it's a known fact or September 11th in this country is a big date or you know known facts that we have somebody comes to you and says hey question I don't think you went to the store yesterday you can say no I did I know it no matter how many times somebody tries to convince you if you actually went to the store yesterday you know it it's sealed I did go to the store it's an experience I had I know it and to God the future is as sure as the past is for us that means you say God are you going to hold me fast he says yes it's it's certain it's done your name is written in the book of life that's faith where I can say that the future my future is as written as certain as the past that I am certain of this is what it means when it says in Hebrews 13 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever oh it has blessed me so much to know that as certain as I am about the past experiences I've had God is the certainty of the future is as certain for it is as true for him so yesterday today and forever he's eternal and immortal he can never die his promise will be fulfilled then it says the second thing it says is he's invisible and it's proclaimed here you know it says to to the God who the latter part of the word says be honor and glory forever and ever amen which God the invisible God this really hit home to me even a few weeks ago can I praise and give glory and honor to God because he's invisible think about it for a moment that's hard for me if I'm honest if I could see God I feel like I could praise you I could give you glory and honor and how I wish I could be in heaven with Maria and everybody else today because I would see you but can I glory and honor and forever and ever the invisible God you need faith for that he hides himself I can't see him he's mysterious his ways are mysterious I don't I I wouldn't have planned this course for my life it were if it were up to me he says that he loves me he plans for me yet he's invisible and I give glory you see the faith of Paul you see the faith he wants to give Timothy he says Timothy you're gonna face situations where you wonder why God isn't more visible to your natural eyes he says to the invisible God give glory and honor see this is the God who does something out of nothing like I said you must close your eyes you must choose to not live by sight in order to live by faith you must choose to not desire the visible guard God in order to glory and glorify the invisible God the God who doesn't explain everything that he does Hebrews chapter 11 there's a little nugget in Hebrews chapter 11 that that that is easy to miss it's the chapter of faith yes but it's also something that I found repeatedly as I went back and read it even yesterday actually that I saw is very interesting and that is this faith is tied very closely to things not seen and that phrase or that that attitude that that meant that mentality of the things not seen is is sprinkled throughout this chapter that I missed for many years it starts in the very first verse where it says faith is the assurance of things hope for the conviction the conviction the knowing the certainty of the things not seen that's what faith is verse 3 by faith we understand that the world's were prepared by the Word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible what is seen was not made out of things which are visible so what you see with your eyes what you see and hear with your ears you see the mountain you see the trees and all that you can say I know Longspeak is over there you spin me around a few times and I figure out where's West Yap I know Longspeak is over there but can you believe that that came out of the invisible what you see and are so sure of God simply said now it is let there be and there was let there be Longspeak and there was so wonderful words what you see was not made out of things which are visible in other words God had to take something invisible something which you couldn't see and create out of it he says the same thing in verse 13 all these die now he talks about people okay it's easy to think about yes God the Creator creating light all these things out of that which is invisible that which is not seen but now people what about me Lord are you going to create things and things out of things are you going to create the life of Christ to me that's ultimately what we're seeking are you going to

create the life of Christ in me in a visible tangible knowable way not only by me but by my wife and my children and others who interact with me out of the invisible in other words there's not even the shred of Christ likeness in me in my flesh dwells nothing good Paul said I'm a wretched man my flesh is so horrible you're going to take that horrible flesh which is as un-Christ like as the devil himself and make something visible the life of Christ in it I have faith for that by faith verse 13 all these he's talking about Abraham Isaac Jacob and before that Noah Enoch Abel etc and the mountains all these died in faith every one of these died in faith without receiving the promise but having seen them some interesting phrase they didn't receive the promise but they saw them like that that would be like me saying hey I'm going to give you a birthday if I said to one of my children I'm going to give you a birthday gift and they can't see well they don't receive it but they can see it that's exactly what he did for these Old Testament Saints he's died in faith without receiving the promise but they saw them and welcome them from a distance they saw them with eyes of faith they having received they didn't receive the promise but they welcome them from a distance having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth one more verse verse 27 by faith now he's talking about Moses also living by faith by faith Moses left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king now I pondered on this I always thought that Moses left Egypt because he was running away from Pharaoh in fact I went back and read in Exodus chapter 2 it does say that he was afraid that the king would find out that Pharaoh would find out and then it says he fled to Midian but for some reason here it says that he fled left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the kingdom maybe it's talking about when he left with the Israelites but regardless it says that Moses left Egypt not fearing of the wrath of the king for he endured as seeing him who is unseen there's that word unseen again how was it that Moses now he did was afraid and he was a little bit timid when God confronted him within the burning bush and they came back and stumbling mumbling and yet he could stand in front of Pharaoh and said let my people go why he stood in front of Pharaoh and looked at Pharaoh but he couldn't see Pharaoh he saw God he saw this man who was the most powerful man on the face of the earth at that time Pharaoh and yet he says I will not live by sight I will live by faith I see God I don't care what you say Pharaoh I don't care what you do to me I see God and that's the life that God wants us to have that's faith Christ is the greatest example of that now when you face a trial now when you face a person now when you face the government authorities which I believe we will I think in our lifetime that's my personal opinion but they will confront us and we will have to stand before rulers and authorities what will we say I'm not gonna embarrass my children but my Olivia told me this morning that she had a dream last night that she and Zave were being persecuted like Richard Wurmbrand and she woke up in a panic with Zave's feet were I don't even think she's told Zave yet his feet were all beaten and scarred like that film we saw of Richard Wurmbrand and and she acknowledged to me she said dad I don't think I'm quite ready for it yet but maybe someday we'll get to suffer for the name of the Lord and what will happen now children I'm not trying to scare you the Lord will take care of you he'll hold you fast we don't have to fear but even if you should face that as Richard Wurmbrand did what what will keep us we'll see them and we'll see them coming with the whips and all that stuff but we'll see God says Lord you won't fail me I know you'll take care of me I know you're gonna preserve me I know you will hold me fast see it is written see my name is written in the palm of his hand he will hold me fast so the God who creates something out of nothing it says God Moses saw that which is unseen as seeing him who is unseen and unless we come to the place where we are living on the basis of seeing the one who is unseen we will always be affected by the things of this earth we'll see this and we'll see that we'll hear this news we'll hear the other news or the government's gonna do this or they're gonna have more restrictions or now they want us to wear five masks I don't know what else they ask us to do but I see him who is unseen I say Lord you will hold me fast preserve me and here's a verse in Colossians chapter 1 let's look at this together Colossians as you know is a wonderful Colossians 1 especially is a

wonderful chapter that exalts the supremacy of Christ that Christ may be preeminent in all things this is the essence of Colossians chapter 1 but I want you to see this in verse 15 Colossians 1 verse 15 he is the image of the invisible God there's that word again Jesus is the image of the invisible God I know I don't think I've really delved into this or dug into it enough I want to meditate on it some more I hope you will too that Jesus is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of all creation by him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth visible and invisible have you seen the visible things that God created oh that's easy yeah I'll just look out around you mountains the trees and all that what about the invisible things that God created that Jesus Christ has created have you seen those by him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things have been created through him and for him that includes the president prime ministers the rulers and authorities dictators who have come and may come in our time but what I see here is that if Christ is not in me if Christ the image of the invisible God is not in me in other words if I haven't gotten revelation of Christ then I won't be able to see these invisible things I'll be affected by the physical I'll be affected by the natural I'll be affected by my senses by what I feel what I see what I hear the secret to seeing these invisible things is the image of Christ the invisible God in me this is our hope the hope of glory Christ in you he says in the same chapter this is the hope of glory Christ in you and when Christ is in you when the image of the invisible God is there planted on your heart then the invisible things and the visible things that's the same can you see that God is going to finish the work he started in you not with my earthly eyes but I can with my spiritual eyes because I have the image of the invisible God in my heart things invisible wonderful phrase you know that poem that talks about three men were walking on a wall fact faith and feeling a feeling took a fall and faith was walking so close to feeling that faith started to fall too but fact pulled faith back up and feeling followed too this is a lot of times I get questions asked one of the most common questions I get in especially speaking with young people Q&A sessions is I find that I'm affected by my feelings and I was too when I was younger especially my teenage and 20 something years my feelings I would wake up one morning just not wondering why I felt kind of crummy no reason nothing's really changed everything's about the same as it is but I just kind of feel crummy and it affected my spiritual life and I found that my faith was being affected by my feelings the way I felt a particular day or if I woke up with a headache or as a bad mood or things didn't go my way especially then it would affect my faith as well our faith must be based on fact that's what will pull faith back up that's why we have our children memorize the promises I mean this week was a command but no it's a promise yes the last we memorize I will make a roadway in the wilderness rivers in the desert I will do it that's the fact everything else even the newspapers are your own idea of history that's not fact God's Word is fact that's the only thing that's fact heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away Jesus said this is the only thing that I know is fact and if it's written here that God said he would make a roadway in the wilderness he would make a river in the desert and that's a fact and my faith is going to be based on that not on how I feel a particular day or the fact that I can't see the river I can't see the roadway all I see is wilderness all I see is desert but fact says there will be a roadway fact says there will be a river and so it shall be it says it says in Christ the promises of God are yea and what amen yes who says the amen you and I do God said yes what did you say amen this is promise this is faith that's based on fact keep this faith brothers and sisters if you can walk this life of faith if we can walk this life of faith it doesn't matter what happens around us this is what Paul said I want to give you one thing Timothy not a gift I'm not gonna lay my hands and pray a double portion of the anointing or you'll become a better preacher than me or you'll plant more churches than me keep the faith Timothy and then you'll fulfill God's plan for your life keep the faith husbands it doesn't matter if you don't have a public ministry or what gifts God gives you or doesn't give you keep the faith strive fight that good fight to keep this faith that God has said it say amen

and live out that amen keep the faith wives mothers in your journey as you raise children as you do the work in the home or whatever things you do keep the faith keep the faith children when you go to school and it's hard and you're like why am I wasting my time studying this what good is it going to do me keep the faith keep the faith and then he says in back in first Timothy one the invisible God and then he says the only God so first I talked about the fact that God rules time there's no yesterday today forever it's all the same with the Lord a days as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day it's all the same to him the future is as certain to God as the past secondly the invisible God's Word just because God is invisible doesn't mean his word will not be fulfilled there's power in the word of the invisible God remember that there is power in the word of the invisible God just because he's invisible doesn't mean that his word doesn't have power if he said it you don't have to see it it will come to pass and the third one here is that he alone is God the only God I think it's in Jude 1 that same passage we were looking at earlier see if I can find it yeah the last verse of Jude 1 verse 25 to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory majesty dominion and authority before all time and now and forever now what does it mean when it says the only God I think for for those of most of us listening if not all of us listening to this word if I said that Jesus Christ is the only God you'd acknowledge it intellectually yeah I don't believe in any of the other gods that are in the world Jesus Christ is the only true God but to really experience the reality of this word I believe it means that God is the only one who needs to know his wisdom is what matters so who are the other gods that are in competition with Jesus me what do I mean by that I think I know I think well this is how it should be I think I'm wise I think I have understanding and so now all of a sudden I'm in competition with the only wise God here's God's wisdom and there's my wisdom and I'm trying to elevate my wisdom to somehow be comparable or I got to decide whether should I do it this way or well God's Word says and then it becomes a and this is going on in Christendom God's Word says well but you know what let's go back and study the context and let's analyze this and read the Greek and all it all this stuff well God's Word said it and if my wisdom is somehow in my estimation a even a consideration when it comes to the wisdom of God then I'm trying to exalt myself as God he's not the only God then you'll also think yourself as a God you know there's a verse in 1st Corinthians chapter 2 1st Corinthians 2 Paul is writing to the church in in Corinth and saying verse 1 let's read from verse 1 when I came to you brothers and sisters I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom that's very interesting Paul was a very different preacher from most preachers of today I would say the vast majority of preachers I listen to a lot of preaching just here and there usually I make it through a few minutes and decide no this is not gonna help me turn it off because what is it it's the wisdom of man superiority of speech very articulate very moving emotionally and you know they know how to their inflections of their voices and prancing around the stage and all this stuff that goes on superiority of speech and of wisdom and Paul said listen no I did not come to you with superiority of speech or wisdom I didn't make my words so fancy that I could impress you oh wow what a cute sermon I love how he tied all these little things together that wasn't Paul he wasn't interested in tying anything together he was interested in getting you to know God and he says for I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified I was with you in weakness in a sense I think Paul had the option of being with them in power Paul was a very smart man absolutely the most brilliant of all the biblical writers in my opinion you write look at how he writes there's so much intellectual power in him but he's saying when I was with you I was in weakness I sat there silent while you guys argued about this and argue about that and I and I had the intellect I sat in Gamaliel's school for years and I could have proved all of you wrong but I was there in weakness and you guys thought I was a dummy let's teach Paul he knows he doesn't know something I was with you in weakness I was with you in fear Paul you planted this church there are these junior preachers there you know about that man that's living in sin with his with his father's wife you know about that other situation you know that these guys are all just fighting with each

other they break bread and they're gluttons and you sat there with fear and trembling mighty Apostle Paul and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom I wasn't out to try to convince you if you didn't believe it that's fine it doesn't change God's Word I wasn't with you in persuasive words of wisdom but I was with you in the demonstration of the spirit and of power you see how Paul had to lay aside his prowess his power his intellectual ability his persuasive words which he could have used if I read these verses correctly he could have made the sermon sound real powerful and real emotionally stirring but he said no I'm not going to because I want the Spirit of God to move I'm gonna give you a very plain ordinary sounding sermon and you're gonna leave thinking that I didn't get anything out of it yeah because you weren't interested in the power of God but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God so that your faith see this is what Paul was after I want I want you to have faith I don't want you to leave with an intellectual stirring and an emotional stirring and this is what's going on sadly and I've fallen prey to it for years in many churches they meant intellectual stirring emotional stirring I think yep this is gonna change my life no it's not if you don't get faith the only thing that can change your life change our lives brothers and sisters is faith so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men but on the power of God you see how I love these I long I long I'll tell you church family I long this is the prayer of my heart that I would preach this way I don't know if I'm there yet God is my judge I'll have to answer to him but I say Lord if I'm not change me or put me down and shut my mouth for some time until I come to the place where I'm not trying to impress people with my words or give some cute idea or who can do they were they offended by them my saying that no none of that Lord I want them to have faith and for that faith to rest on your wisdom the only wise God I am NOT God I know that's easy to say but you know we act like that sometimes that somehow I have some wisdom they're gonna impress me oh you gave such a good sermon or you're saying this way no there's only one God and he's the only one that's wise and if we and you know some of us have to get up here and speak but we're all have to be fathers mothers husbands wives can we lead our wives husbands in a way that no I'm not the wise one God is the only wise one can we lead our children fathers and mothers with this way that I'm not the wise parent God is the only wise one he's the only wise God I don't have wisdom think about applying these verses now with our children I came to our children can we tell it say our children say to our children I didn't come to you with superiority of speech or of wisdom proclaiming to you the testimony of God impressing you with how I said it I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ I was with my child can they can I say to them I was with you in weakness in fear and trembling it says fathers bring your children up in the fear and the instruction of the Lord you know that starts with us fathers I have to be in fear and trembling as I raise my children I'm learning that no after having six finally it's getting through this thick skull of mine Santosh live your life in the fear of the Lord and then it will go well with your children bring them up in the fear of the instruction of the Lord how by walking in fear and trembling living before God's face not afraid of him but say Lord I want to treat these children of yours with reverence with all give me your wisdom Lord I dare not give them my wisdom I did not tell them all you need to do this in your life or do that other thing in your life if it doesn't come from you the wisdom from above that is pure sister Annie was speaking to the children about how the other wisdom is to the women is demonic do you know that if you give if we give our children I don't want I want to say you if we give our children an earthly wisdom that's demonic would you ever want your children to be exposed to demonic activity and you know let's read that James chapter 5 sorry James 3 who among you verse 13 is wise and understanding let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom what's the gentleness of wisdom I'm convicted even as I'm reading that right now I come to my children as wise wiser than them but it better not be I'm in my 40s you're in your teens so you should listen to me it's a sure way to expose them to the demonic wisdom many fathers are trying to do that I know what's right I'm ahead of the home you better listen to me yes that's true but you

could lead your children astray we could lead our children astray instead verse 15 this wisdom is not that which comes down this other wisdom it's not that which comes down from above but the wisdom from above verse 17 is first pure peaceable gentle reasonable full of mercy good fruits unwavering without hypocrisy the wisdom that is not from above verse 15 is earthly natural and demonic that's a powerful word if I treat my children raise my children with an earthly natural wisdom God's Word calls it demonic you know we're careful about what movies we allow our children to watch or what books we allow them to read how about the wisdom that we're giving them this earthly natural wisdom that's affected by the psychological psychological books that we read and these other cute ideas even in Christianity I'm all for good books that help us learn how to be good parents but then come as you read the books as you read oh you know how to treat children with this temperament of that temperament say Lord okay this is helping me in some practical ways but I want you to guide me into the path of wisdom otherwise I could read this wonderful Christian psychological book about parenting and and expose my children to demonic influence demonic wisdom so this this power must be the power of God let's go back to Hebrews 11 before I close Hebrews 11 verse 11 fight this good fight of faith actually before we do that keep a finger in Hebrews 11 I'd like to go to 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 if you will with me 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 how shall we fight this fight of faith I think I should mention that Paul tells us he says fight the good fight of faith what do I do does it mean I need to make sure my children have half an hour of Bible study or we have prayer meetings or I take them to a good church family or all these things know how do we fight this fight of faith he says 2nd Corinthians 10 though we verse 3 though we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the flesh and by flesh you know yeah he's he's talking it could mean physical things like okay even though I live in the flesh I'm not raising my children in the fear and the admonition of the Lord by physically shaking their hands hey you need to fear God or punishing them discipling them you know that's not our warfare we though we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the flesh again it's this I cannot war according to the spirit if I'm warring according to the flesh it's an either or though we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the according to the flesh for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses I'm thinking now especially about us as parents and even in our relationships with others where God has called us to have spiritual authority to fight the fight of faith how shall we fight it he says in verse 5 first of all destroy speculations you know that so much unbelief comes through speculation yeah this is probably what's gonna happen and the news media is great at speculating they speculate this is gonna happen the stock market is gonna happen on the future in five years the environment or this and that speculation and all of a sudden Christians are influenced by speculation destroy it he says we have destroyed speculations the next time you read some speculation the news media just imagine destroying it in an arrow through that I refuse to listen to that no place in my heart for that speculation every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God every lofty thing that means that thought that says I know the world is full of loftiness Christendom is full of loftiness destroy it any lofting lofty thing that raises itself up against the knowledge of God and we say I know God you love me I remember how you revealed yourself to me now this other influence is raising itself up against what I know of you and I refuse to accept it I know you love me I'm known by you that's enough and I refuse to allow anything else to raise itself up you must fight the fight of faith brother where in our thoughts he says we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ ready to punish all disobedience wherever your obedience whenever your obedience is complete so this fight of faith is in our thoughts I find that in my thought I find a speculation wanting to come in perhaps influenced by what I see or read or what somebody says now all of a sudden the devil's trying to get me to speculate destroy it strive give it your full attention keep the faith brother sister child destroy that speculation destroy that lofty thing that exalts itself against the wisdom of God now let's go back to Hebrews 11 now close Hebrews 11 verse 13 it says that

they died in faith without receiving the promise imagine if some if God said I want you to trust me but you're gonna die before you receive it I said hey children I've got this much money saved up for you but you'll only get it after you die what kind of a what kind of a gift is that you know that he this is the faith that they had in Hebrews 11 verse 13 you know in a sense I think some of these men had more faith than most Christians today and I really think that's true Abraham the way I read this verse they didn't receive this promise now I don't know if they knew they wouldn't receive it in his lifetime when God said your your seed shall be this as the stars of the sea stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore did Abraham actually think yeah that's gonna happen in my lifetime I don't know I don't think so because how does a man who's in his hundred years old expect to have like a million children yet that's what God said I mean he actually said you try counting those stars you counted up to a thousand guess what it's more than that and it says that Abraham and these other men died in faith without receiving the promise but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance and confessed that they were strangers and exiles on this earth in other words Lord your promise is not for this earth I'm looking to the reward which is in heaven and then he says in verse 39 these including the ones that we read about they gained approval through their faith this phrase has really become dear to me again as I've been meditating on this that what God is looking for in our faith is that his approval is more valuable to us than the answer that we're looking for let me say that again God's approval gaining God's approval through my faith is more important to me than whether God actually does some earthly thing that I'm asking for now let's say Lord I want you to heal me of this yes that's a good prayer to ask you can pray in faith for that but there's something that's more important that supersedes that request Lord I want your approval all these having gained approval by faith that's why these ones are in heaven today I believe because they gained approval by God now when you pray for healing when you pray for that job when you pray for that financial situation when you pray for that child when you pray for that circumstance say Lord yes Lord I have this need and it's pressing and I'm feeling the pressures of this earth but there's one thing that I want more than anything else I want to gain your approval what a precious way to live and they gained it it says able also gained approval verse 2 it is the man of old it is by it the men of old gained approval when the approval of God is more precious to us than the earthly answer we're looking for even in good things then he is pleased by it without faith it is impossible to please God let's trust this God you know I I was thinking about this that if you have if you built a bridge how would you test that the bridge is really strong would you send a cat across the bridge oh that's no test you need to send a train over it or a big heavy truck with weighing a thousand pounds let's send the heaviest thing we got to see if the bridge is solid now who is the bridge it's God he is faithful he's the one on whom I'm putting my trust and God is in the wants to prove to the world around us that he is who he is that he's the only God he's the only wise God he's the immortal invisible eternal God he's that strong bridge and so he's saying Santosh come I want to take you through a trial so heavy so burdensome that it's going to take a strong bridge for it to go across not this light oh yeah I had a little bit of a mosquito bite that's the cat going across the bridge maybe that's where it starts and you're learning to trust this bridge and you're not yet willing to drive this 1,000 pound truck across the bridge but God won't start there he says let's start with the cat okay now let's send the dog a little heavier let the trials get a little bit more difficult you know why God allows more and more difficult trials to come in your life he wants to prove to the world that the bridge is strong that he is who the word says he is that who he is who you say he is he's able to save us he's able to cleanse us from all sin he's able to sanctify us well prove it then the world will say I say yes Lord here I am send me to a lost and a hurting world take me through what it is that you want me to go through I don't relish suffering sometimes I preach about suffering perhaps you guys think man he must like suffering no I don't but I say Lord I want to get to the end of my life having proved that you are who you say you are you are a faithful God I'm gonna quote something from David Wilkerson which really

blessed me please listen what the world hungers for is the sight of a Christian who is being deeply tested someone who's in trouble his back against the wall with no way out yet he sings that this Christian rejoices trusting in his God he doesn't complain of his situation rather he sings of the Lord's faithfulness he trusts not in man nor in circumstances but in God this is the miracle that will win the lost this is the miracle that will win the lost much more than the preaching much more than all the tracks you give God wants a Christian who's being deeply tested in his life this is the miracle that will win the lost the miracle of true peace in dark times why the worldly and wicked are also in a hard place and they want hope the worldly and the wicked are also in a hard place now you look at them and they're smiling and all that stuff you may not know it but they're in a dark place it comes out every now and then you hear a glimpse of it and they want hope what God needs is somebody who's willing to be taken through a trial somebody will say Lord that bridge is stronger than you proved in my life yet let's take something heavier I'm in

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