

Unfailing Faith

Luke 22 v 31 – onwards

Introduction

- Good to be with you a couple of times this year so far
- A time of testing both individually and corporately
- A time of God's preparation being sifted like wheat is both personal and for the church
- He has a great planned future which we don't see

Read Passage

Pictures of a threshing floor and sifting wheat

Hard floor was of stone with grooves cut into it and the heads of the wheat were removed by oxen treading it pulling a piece of timber which would also separate the heads

Then the heads were tossed in the air where the wind would blow away the chaff and the kernels of wheat would fall back to the ground or into a basket as they were the heavier than the chaff

1. Why does God allow testing?
 - a. That we might know what we have is real, James says that our Faith should be of great worth than Gold
 - b. That we might be strengthened in Faith
So Look at Faith for a moment, what kind of faith do you have?
2. We have a promise from Jesus that we will have tribulation as long as we live in this world, but we are also told that we have a victory over it all, our faith in God!
When we encounter difficulties and trials, we are given a wonderful opportunity to be a witness of the grace and

care of God. Anyone can get by when times are good, but when we thrive in the midst of extreme adversity, people will sit up and take notice. When we or anyone we know is the middle of a test, we should pray as did Jesus for unflinching faith. Faith is one mark of a true disciple. Real faith actually grows stronger when it is tested. God's grace is only fully realized when we need it, and like Peter when we experience the grace of God upholding us in a trial, we can encourage others to be strong, too. Below is a sample prayer for unflinching faith.

DISTORTED FAITH

Is your Faith Distorted?

“DISTORTED FAITH PRODUCES DISILLUSIONED PEOPLE.”

“PEOPLE BECOME DISILLUSIONED WITH GOD BECAUSE THEY HAVE A COMPLETE MISUNDERSTANDING OF FAITH.”

And because of that very fact, they live their lives in confusion, frustration, negativity, and even anger at God and the church. And so often they feel that God has cheated them big time

“THEY UNDERSTAND FAITH AS THE ABILITY TO GET SOMETHING FROM GOD .”

Or again:

“FAITH IS THAT WHICH IF THEY HAVE ENOUGH, THEY CAN GET ANYTHING THEY WANT FROM GOD.”

In short:

“FAITH IS THE COINAGE, MONEY, PURCHASING POWER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

Then of course, when faith fails to be the **big producer** or **purchaser** as it was hyped up to be, people become disillusioned with God, the church, and the whole faith/religious scene! I have seen entire churches, families and individuals thrown into chaos and on life-support because of this distorted concept of faith.

“FAITH IS OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE TO GOD, WHILE UNFAITH IS OUR NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO GOD.”

THE KNOWLEDGE OF FAITH

The Apostle Paul cried out in **Philippians 3:10**,

"THAT I MIGHT KNOW HIM...."

The Apostle Peter greets the Christians of the dispersion in **II Peter 1:1-2**,

"Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith the same as ours..." "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

"WE CANNOT EXPECT TO HAVE AN UNFAILING FAITH IN GOD WITH A SELF-IMPOSED IGNORANCE OF GOD."

"THE MORE WE COME TO KNOW GOD, THE MORE WE WILL BE ABLE TO TRUST GOD."

It is neither wise nor possible to have an enduring and unfaithful faith in an unknown. For instance, I have noticed for some time that there is among certain segments in modern Christianity the dumb and dangerous conviction that knowledge and learning are unnecessary for and even opposed to faith. If you will, they tell us that:

"WE DON'T NEED TO BE BOOK-LEARNED, BUT ONLY SPIRIT-TAUGHT."

Faith Failure – Read Habakkuk

II Corinthians 5:7,

“for we walk by faith and not by sight.”

What assaults our senses these days through the graphic media has the power to cause **FAITH FAILURE**.

There is nothing itself more natural than for men to base their hopes and fears upon their sense data. That drab and drear

data comes at us relentlessly day in and day out and assaults our senses. And if allowed, it will completely swallow us as well as define our lives and our future apprehensions. So that when we **see** a danger threatening us, there we will fear. And only if we **see** a way out, there we will hope.

Follow me now. When we live by sight:

“WE WILL HOPE AND FEAR ONLY AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE.”

And in the life of trying to live by **faith** and by **sight**, let me tell you that **sight** will trump **faith** every time. So what we end up with is this:

“WE WILL TRUST GOD ONLY AS FAR AS OUR EYES CAN SEE, AND NO FURTHER.”

And be sure of this: **“ANY FAITH THAT IS YET TIED TO THE SENSES WILL BE A BRIEF, LIMITED AND FAILING FAITH.”**

All of this is exactly why the Lord in **II Corinthians 5:7** commands us that we are to walk by **FAITH** and not by **SIGHT**. There is an old saying that goes like this:

“TRUE LOVE IS BLIND.”

It is as true if not truer to say:

“TRUE FAITH IS BLIND.”

We cannot simply take the Lord's words about **BLIND FAITH** with a grain of salt. Or again the definition of faith found in Hebrews 11:1, **“...the conviction of things not seen.”**

The words of **II Corinthians 5:7** and **Hebrews 11:1**, like so many well known phrases, have become trite clichés when they are in fact the essence of faith and the key to living the victorious life. We read in **I John 5:4**, **“...and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith.”**

However to live by sight results in this equally powerful fact:

"And this is the victory that overcometh the faith - our world."

What does Unfailing Faith look like

**"FAITH IN GOD IS A CONFIDENT REST AND ASSURANCE
IN THE CHARACTER OF GOD."**

- Faith believes **in** the God Who loves us!
- Faith believes **in** the God Who gave us His Son!
- Faith believes **in** the Jesus Who accomplished our salvation!
- Faith believes **in** the Christ and His work on the cross

-Faith:

**"IS THEN THE HAND THAT RECEIVES WHAT GOD HAD
ALREADY GIVEN TO MANKIND. SALVATION WAS NOT A
REWARD GIVEN TO FAITH, BUT A GIFT ACCEPTED BY
FAITH AS ARE ALL OF GOD'S GRACE GIFTS."**

If you will:

**"FAITH IS THE TOTALLY LOST, DYING AND DESPERATE
PEOPLE JUMPING INTO THE ALREADY EXTENDED
ARMS OF HIS LOVING LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS
CHRIST."**

Ministry

The wind of the Spirit is blowing on us a Church preparing us for the
unseen things God has for us

Has your Faith Failed? Repentance

Commend some for their Faith

See testing as punishment from God

Feel like God has let you down you are angry with him

Some God is going to strengthen you today in your Faith there are
times when God gives a Gift of Faith for the season, in the moment

Some of you need to come and jump again into the loving arms of
Jesus again.