

Faith – Part 10

Be mindful, this will be the last part of the series on faith as a subcategory. But just as with salvation when we come into the Kingdom of God through salvation, it's not a topic that we put in the dustbin. It's a topic that we live out of and we continue then for the rest of our Christian walk on planet Earth to work out our salvation. Then we moved into faith, the fuel of the spirit realm; because it's by faith that we do work out our salvation; because without faith it is impossible to please God. What is not of faith, is sin. So although we're finishing the subcategory of faith today, that doesn't mean that we put the faith topic in the dustbin; because that's what we continue to use as we work out our salvation and go further into the Kingdom of God. So with faith we looked at: what is it, walking by it to the point of contending for it, to come to end of it. Now to overlap a little bit with last week, remember, I raised the question, are we victimized by our thoughts? No, we need to get rid of that victimization complex; because remember, we're to capture every thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and we capture in obedience to Jesus Christ because our whole lifestyle as Christians is to sum everything up in Jesus. That's the plan of God. So our wills (which is another term for our worshipper because that's the only role for our wills is to project that which we worship) our wills kill us in our Christian walk by one of two ways. One is by rebellion and the other is by laziness. Laziness being the usual unrecognized category, and remember, that's why Scripture tells us in Hebrews 2:1 – pay attention lest you drift; because if we aren't paying attention to what the choices are that we're facing any moment, not paying attention to how God views reality as opposed to how we may be viewing reality, then we will drift and we will default to those well worn grooves called the flesh because we've had decades to get those grooves worn down into deep ruts. So it takes energy, it takes an act of the will to shake ourselves, do like we do when we start to fall asleep when driving, remember? We do every trick we can think of to arouse ourselves to wakefulness because it's serious business to drive a car while sleeping. It's even more serious to drive your spiritual car while sleeping and that's why Scripture tells us in Ephesians 5:14 – Awake sleeper and arise from the dead. And that's a command to us to awaken ourselves, using our will, to pay attention, to fix our gaze on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Psalms 37:4, remember – God will give you the desires of your heart. Well He does give you new desires with the new creation; but He also (if you continue to desire the things of the flesh) He will give you the things of the flesh. He will give you your desires. So remember I ended last time talking about an attitude of Christian aggression to bring us to the end of our faith. And that was Matthew 11:12 in the Amplified Version – And from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, the Kingdom of Heaven has endured violent assault and violent men seize it by force. And the Amplified goes on to add—that means as a precious prize. A share in the Heavenly Kingdom is sought with most ardent zeal and intense exertion. And that's something that we're called to do.

Go ahead to the next poster. Because after we talk about faith, remember it's entirely legitimate to ask to have more of it; increase our faith. That's a legitimate prayer. But at the same time we're saying increase our faith, we need to exert aggression to contend for it, to walk in accordance with the faith that we already have. That's simply being good

stewards. We focus on stewardship with our money, sometimes talk about stewardship of our time, but we need to talk about stewardship of our faith; because our calling is to walk by our faith, not only meaning empowered by, but meaning in a manner consistent with, in accordance with, the faith that we're already given. And then to move into contending for it because the third part of contending is we're its representative. We have faith in Christ by which we access the faith of Christ and we then function as the representatives of Christ, the ambassadors of Christ on planet Earth. And all of that is involved in the concept of contending for the faith. Luke 17:21 – The Kingdom of God is within you.

Next poster. So the point I want to make here by way of reminder is the Kingdom of God is within you. That means it's available. God has made the Kingdom of God available. Now we're in it by status as children of God, joint heirs with Christ, saved by grace through faith, we're in His Kingdom in that sense; but just like sanctification, remember, there's a difference in positional sanctification and progressive sanctification. Our position is we are born again; we are saved; that's a done deal. But we need to access all that that provides for us and God has made it available. So by their fruits you know them. The rhetorical question, as always, is how many Christians are accessing the abundant life with the fruit of the Spirit in full bloom? Probably not many. Well, if not, why not? Because if it was all God and He gave us nothing to do, then we would likely all be walking in the abundant life with the fruit of the Spirit in full bloom. The point I'm making is God has made the Kingdom of God in us available. He has made us available—that is to say, awake oh sleeper. Learn what the choices are; learn how God views reality, how I previously viewed reality and simply choose to be God determined, not self determined. That choice never goes away; that choice is always there throughout your Christian walk until you draw your last breath. So we are avail-able; so the choice then is to avail or not avail. And that's where the aggression factor comes in. The Kingdom of God is within you, but it has to be taken. Well what did we learn from Matthew 11:13? It's taken by violent men, taken by force, taken with ardent zeal, taken with passion, with aggression, taken with a mindset that that is something I am going to get. So it's taken violently.

Now to reflect our conditioning, we're even conditioned to think of violence as a bad thing. It's something we have this instinctive abhorrence for; the word violence, it conjures up images of all the evil in the world. It's similar to our abhorrence of the word fear. We are conditioned to think of fear as a bad thing. But the Bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom and even knowing God, you see. So it isn't the word; the word is just the symbol of a reality, but we're conditioned to think of the word and have certain Pavlovian responses flow out of that. So when someone says is fear good or bad, virtually everyone says bad. If someone says is violence good or bad, virtually everyone would say bad. But no, it isn't. Violence when you're seeking to avail yourself of all that is within you, that God has provided in the Kingdom of God, violence is a good thing. Zeal is a good thing. Passion is a good thing, you see. Just like with the fear of the Lord; awe and reverence of God, of course, is the deeper meaning of that word. That's a good thing. So we need to let go of our conditioning to have kind of a negative reaction spoken or unspoken to certain words as

they appear to us in the English language. Violence here is another way of saying hunger and thirst. It's the opposite of lukewarmness. Now remember what love is? Love is a passion for oneness, not a lukewarmness for oneness. So that's what I'm talking about. When you know the love of God, and you love God in response, that love is a passion for oneness. So if we aren't functioning in a passion for oneness, to aggressively drive for all that the Kingdom of God has made available to us, It simply means we do not yet have a full awakening to the love of God. We haven't been quickened to love God in response; thus, we are apathetic, lukewarm, letting most of our thoughts drift, not paying attention, not aggressively seeking, you see. Now I don't say that by way of condemnation. You still have your salvation, but what results is dead works, dead testimony, dead abundant life. The opposite then is to turn and behold this God (which is where we're going in future sessions) and be awakened to His love, so that our love is there because we love because He first loved us, know that love and have this passion awakened. But this is a preliminary step we need to go through here.

Our attitude is to be the attitude of David in Psalm 27:4 – This one thing I have asked for (see he's focal), this one thing I have asked for, that I shall seek. See that's our guideline. This one thing I have asked for, that I shall seek, that I may abide in the house of the Lord every day of my life. Abide in the presence of God every day of his life. You see, asking for it is good, but it's not sufficient; because you are to aggressively seek that which you have asked for. How sincere is the asking when there's no energy invested in the seeking of that which you have asked for?

Now I'm going to introduce one more dimension to that ardent zeal, that passion, and that violence that God wants us to react to His truth with. Matthew 7:7 – Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and it will opened unto you. Now when we read through that verse, we tend to think that's three different ways of saying the same thing—three different choice of words to make the same point. And in a way it is; but I'm going to take it with a slight slant, not to add to Scripture, but to add another slight interpretation to make the point of what I'm making. We learned via David in Psalm 27:4 that what we ask for, we are to seek. But now we're told ask, seek, and knock. So here's the point. What do you knock? That which you asked for, you seek. What do you knock? Well you knock everything out of the way that interferes with your seeking that which you have asked for. We tend to be great at asking, weak at seeking, and very poor at knocking. But the violent attitude that avails oneself of the Kingdom of God, that takes the Kingdom of God that is within you, is that violent attitude summarized by those three words: ask, seek, and knock. That which I have asked for, I shall seek and I will knock everything out of the way that interferes with my seeking. And that taking it—taking the Kingdom of God by force means partaking it, fully utilizing it, availing yourself fully of it, releasing that which is in your spirit man into your mind where it's expressed through your thoughts that you've captured to the obedience of Christ and now project onto planet Earth. That's how the glory of God will cover the Earth through you, His earthen vessel. But so long as you're passively seeking, not knocking,, then of course, what you're releasing is your flesh with self as the basis instead of releasing the mind and Spirit of Jesus Christ onto planet Earth.

Now this is the attitude that Jesus described in Matthew 13:44-46 – when He spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven in terms of the treasure in the field; the pearl of great value. Well what was the treasure in the field? How is it sought? Oh, by taking and selling everything that you have so that you may buy the field to have the treasure, you see. That's another Scriptural way of addressing the passion and zeal and aggression and violence that I'm talking about here. We're to go from, I can take it or leave it, to the following. You've heard the old saying that even a blind hog will find an acorn now and then. Well when I was in college, there was a young man, a fraternity boy who was at a party who was trying to get it on with one of the young ladies and he had just met her, okay? But in his drunken stupor, he was saying I want you, I need you, and I've got to have you. Well think of that; that even a drunken young college student was speaking a spiritual truth; because we're to go from I want you, to I want You, I need You, I can do nothing without You, and I've got to have You. See, that's what David was talking about, as the deer pants after the water brook. The deer is thirsty, he's got to have water, got to have it, he'll fight, he will run through anything, he'll contest anything to get to water; because he's going to die of thirst except he access that water. And that's to be our attitude.

It's to have our behaviors as Christians flow out of the following truth. Everything else is not just worth less; everything else is worthless. And that's the attitude of Paul in Philippians 3:8 (King James Version) – For Whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung that I may win Christ. Because compared to the eternal glory, the weight of glory that we access, by accessing the Kingdom of God in its fullness, everything else is offensive; it's repulsive; it's negative; it's not something you want in your sight; it's something you've got to get out of your sight; get out of your smell range and so on—it's dung, you see. And that's the attitude that we are to aim for.

So what then is the end of your faith (since that's the subtitle that I had on the schedule)? I Peter 1:9 (King James Version) – Receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls. So the end of your faith is the salvation of your soul. So what happens next? Hebrews 12:2 (King James Version) – Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. See the end of our faith is to come into Jesus Christ and after that the whole Christian walk is looking unto Jesus. And then Jesus Christ is the finisher of your faith; He is the end of everything, you see, because He completes everything. Here's the sequence. Your faith comes to several ends when it ends in Jesus Christ.

Number one: You have no faith in you as an individual. You have no faith in faith as an abstraction. You have no faith in your faith as an isolated entity. You have no faith in anything other than Jesus Christ. You have faith in Jesus Christ. You walk in accordance with your faith in Jesus Christ. Then in Jesus Christ you live and move and have your being. Then you partake of the faith of Jesus Christ. Then your faith in Christ looses the faith of Christ; thus, Jesus becomes the finisher of your faith. So for instance, as a practical example, if I'm in a circumstance and I begin to have anxiety and stress and fear pop up, then I have two options. One is to focus on my faith and its inadequacy and pray for more faith. The other is to look unto Jesus, the finisher of my faith and start calling to mind the faith of Jesus Christ Who had no shadow of turning in Himself as He

went to the cross to receive the fullness of the wrath of the Father, while being forsaken by the Father, while asking why have You forsaken Me? Remember? What test of faith is there greater than the test of Jesus to receive the wrath of the Father for the sins of the world in the absence of communion with the Father while forsaken (the outer darkness if you will), walking by faith, even when He was carried past understanding. That's the faith of Jesus and there is no faith beyond that faith because there's no test beyond that test. And He passed that test, completed that test, did every single thing according to the will of the Father, no matter how horrible the circumstances in His physical suffering and the spiritual suffering in the forsakenness. So if my faith seems inadequate in the circumstance, I have two choices. Focus on my faith or begin to focus on the faith of Jesus, looking unto Jesus. This is what Jesus did; this is how Jesus did it. Let me tell you about my Jesus; let me tell you how He transcends the circumstance; let me tell you how the eternal weight of glory is there for me; let me tell you how He did this for the joy that was before Him. At your right hand are pleasures forever, you see. I'm fulfilling my purpose on planet Earth as a revelation of the character of Jesus Christ to the world by telling you about Jesus, not by begging for more faith. So the point I'm making is yes, we have faith in Jesus; but that faith in Jesus then is to have us see the faith of Jesus and loose the faith of Jesus into the situation. So the end of your faith is what accesses the more abundant life that Jesus told about in John 10:10. It's one aspect of the fulfillment of the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:10 – Thy Kingdom come on Earth as it is in Heaven. Because in Heaven, everything is running by faith, you see. I know there will be a millennial kingdom; but the operational principles in Heaven can be brought to bear on planet Earth through us, His earthen vessels. It's in part the fulfillment of Psalms 72:19 – The glory of God will cover the Earth. And in my little part, you see, I release the glory of God onto planet Earth when I'm looking unto Jesus, the finisher of my faith rather than focusing on the adequacy or inadequacy of my faith, you see. So the question is: am I going to look at my faith or look at Jesus? And which one am I going to release? It's in part the fulfillment of Luke 18:8 – when Jesus asked: when the Son of man comes, will He find faith on the Earth? Well we can answer in the affirmative because we are losing His faith on planet Earth. And it's part of Galatians 2:20 (in the King James Version) – I live, yet not I, the Spirit of Christ within me, you see. Because I only have two options: to loose my unrenewed mind or to loose Jesus Christ onto planet Earth.

So when we come to the end of our faith, into Christ, we have not come to the end of our God. So I want to make one more point about Psalms 27:4 because that verse goes on to say this one thing I have asked for; that I shall seek that I may dwell in the house of the Lord every day of my life and behold Thy beauty. So part of the beauty of the Lord is the following. When you have faith in Christ, you only have two options. One is to not walk in accordance with, in a manner consistent with your faith in Christ. And when you don't, it's sin. Romans 14:23 – What is not of faith is sin. So if you have faith in Jesus, but you don't walk in a manner consistent with your faith in Jesus, that is sin. But then when you receive the revelation of your sin, of not walking in accordance with your faith in Jesus, then you get the revelation of the grace of God even greater than you knew because of Romans 5:20 – Where sin abounds, grace even more abounds. So as a child of God when my faith is in Jesus Christ; and then I receive the conviction that I have not walked in accordance with my faith in Christ and I take that to the foot of the cross and I

receive the revelation that oh, where this sin abounds, His grace even more abounded. Then the blood of Jesus has its value go up in my estimation and understanding and I get a deeper revelation of the transcendent grace of God manifested as transcendent forgiveness paid for on the cross. So when we do not walk in accordance with faith in Jesus Christ, but then we repent, we loose a greater revelation of the amazing grace of God; for where this sin abounds, His grace even more abounds. That's the beauty of Jesus Christ.

Oh but when we do walk in accordance with our faith in Jesus; you remember grace has more than one functional definition; it's all unmerited favor. One aspect I just mentioned and that's the transcendent forgiveness of God paid for through His grace by the blood of Jesus. But when you do walk in accordance with faith in Jesus Christ, then you get a greater revelation of God's empowering presence. Because the other aspect of grace is the unmerited, omnipotent, power of God operating in my behalf. So when I do face the circumstance and I walk in a manner consistent with my faith in Jesus, He doesn't just complete my faith, His power is now released into the circumstance. That's when you're walking by faith meaning empowered by; but you can't walk by faith meaning empowered by if you're not walking by faith in a manner consistent with, you see. So if you're putting your faith in your wealth, you will not access the empowering presence of God. So yes, we want to walk empowered by; but the way to walk empowered by is to walk in a manner consistent with. But whether you do or don't, you get a deeper revelation of the grace of God; on the one hand, the transcendent grace of God where grace abounds beyond your sin—even your sin of not walking in accordance with your faith in Jesus Christ. But when you do, you then get a deeper revelation of God's empowering presence, you see; because that's what taps it, that's the key to the Kingdom of Heaven and a key to unlock it. So at every moment as Christians, we are literally swimming in a sea of grace. The question is how aware are we of it? So you come to the end of your faith when you walk in a manner consistent with your faith in Christ and then loose the empowering presence of Christ. That's what Acts 17:28 means when it says, living and moving and having our being in Christ. Romans 1:17 says the just shall live by faith. Well that's true; but we now see there are two faiths at play here. The gift of faith that we have for salvation in Jesus; that brings us in Jesus, we are now saved, born again Christians. But the second faith is the faith of Jesus that is loosed into the situation. When we walk in a manner consistent with our faith in Christ, we loose the faith of Christ into the situation. And we know Him then, as His empowering presence. And that's simply part of Ephesians 1:10 – The summing up of all things in Jesus; because if your focus is only on your faith, you're summing up in something other than Jesus. But when your faith in Jesus is used, you see, then you are allowing Jesus to be loosed into the situation and you are indeed summing up in Jesus. So that brings us to the end of your faith in Jesus and looses the faith of Jesus; but that's not the end of the Kingdom of God; because the next step is the following.

Galatians 5:6 tell us – Faith works through love. And though you have all faith so as to move mountains and have not love, it profits you nothing. So the point of faith is to have a printout of love. But there's an intermediate stop to come to that love; to have our faith work through love. That intermediate stop is the place called “abiding in Him.”

Because, except you abide in Me, you can do nothing including you cannot love. So the next time that we come together, we're going to start addressing that intermediate stop called abiding in Him. And we're going to begin to take these operational principles that we've covered in the Kingdom of God to begin to apply them. And the first session we'll talk about will be principles to abide by; because when we abide by these principles, it brings us into abiding where we access the abiding love of God; and that abiding love of God then as printed out is the fruit of the Spirit. So that's the rough sequence that we will go forward with. But this concludes the subtopic on faith; but don't think it's going into the dustbin. So my time is up and I thank you for yours.