

Faith – Part 5

We started with holiness, then sin, then judgment, then cross of Christ and then came into the kingdom of God through the doorway called salvation. We looked at what salvation really is in all its various meanings and then looked at working it out and learned that everything we do from the time we are saved and come into the kingdom of God is in one way or another working out our salvation. We do that by faith, the fuel of the spirit realm. We looked at what faith is according to the Biblical definition and then the last time that we met (two weeks ago), we examined walking by faith; first looking at walking by faith meaning empowered by and then moving into the second meaning of walking by faith meaning in accordance with. And that's where we left it last time. We looked at a few posters last time; thus reminding us of the key poster in this series that we're never to forget, never to suppress, and never try to move onto another revelation that replaces it. There is a God and that God has three critical essential characteristics. He is the sovereign King, He is the passionate lover, and He is the fierce but righteous judge. And all our problems in relating to this God relate to suppressing one part or the other of what God is as He has revealed Himself to us. In regard to the subject of faith, we looked at how the fullness of faith in the God of the Bible must obligatorily include linking to all the critical essences of God. We believe that He is truth; we trust His motivation because He is love; and we operate in awe and reverence which is called the fear of the Lord including in awe of the power of God; because if your faith is in a God Who is not sovereign, then your faith will appear to be little because the object of your faith has been diminished in your self determined view of God. So true Biblical faith relates to God in all of His essences in all of their fullness as opposed to some limitation put on one of the essences by the mind of man. We can never separate ourselves from this revelation of the God of Genesis 1:1 and these two critical truths that can flow out of Genesis 1:1. He is the only uncreated thing in all of existence and He is the only self determined thing in all of existence. And that means that every single thing in existence other than God has its creation and its meaning and its value established by the God of Genesis 1:1.

So let's move on now. Suppose that I am in fear of something other than God. I pray for more faith. Well that's good and that's Biblical; but is it sufficient? Is it addressing the whole truth of what is meant in the Bible of walking by faith? Do you really need more faith or are you simply not walking in accordance with the faith that you already have? Do you have faith in the God of the Bible including all three of His critical essences? If so, then you don't need more faith; you need to walk in accordance with the faith that you already have. So let's take a dramatic example. Do you fear death? Then you do not need more faith; you simply need to walk in accordance with the faith that you already have. Well, what faith is that? Well I'll draw a few Scriptures (of course, you could think of many others): II Timothy 3:16 – All Scripture is inspired by God—that is to say the Bible is true. What does the Bible tell us? In regard to Jesus, Acts 2:24 – It was impossible for the grave to hold Him. Not a narrow victory, remember, eked out by the power of God over the power of death. It was impossible for the grave to hold Him. And He is the first fruit because of His resurrection, Hebrews 2:15 – we are set free from the captivity of the fear of death. Why? Philippians 1:21 – To die is gain. Well, why is to

die gain? II Corinthians 5:8 – Absent from the body—present with the Lord. So at the moment of physical death, your spirit departs and is in the presence of Jesus Christ. The body follows. I Thessalonians 4:16-17 – at the rapture, you will receive a glorified body to exist for eternity future in the presence of God. Hebrews 2:8 – He has the power to subject all things to Himself, including death. He has the power of life over death.

So when you look at just those few Scriptures, if you have faith in the God of the Bible, then if you have the fear of death, you don't need more faith. You just simply aren't using the faith that you already have. You're not setting your mind on the things of the spirit. You're defaulting to the flesh because Scripture tells us to pay attention lest you drift; because if you don't, as an act of your will, pay attention to the truth of God, you will drift into the well worn ruts of the flesh that you've had for decades. You're not meditating on the Word of God. You're listening to something other than the Word of God; and Mark 4:24 tells us – take care what you listen to. That's our responsibility to take care to what we listen to. So the faith, if you have the fear of death that you're walking in accordance with, is in something other than the faith in the God of the Bible. You're walking in faith in the power of death to have more influence over your eternal state than you are in faith of the power of God to have influence over your eternal state. Well, if you know the Scriptures I've just given you and you have faith in the God of the Bible, your fear of death is not flowing out of weak faith, your fear of death is flowing out of rebellion. You're simply choosing to listen to voices coming out of your unrenewed mind and out of circumstances that are exalting themselves against the knowledge of God which is revealed in His Word to you.

So as you can hopefully see, your need in that circumstance is not for more faith; your need is to be faithful to the faith that you already have. In each such situation, you are listening to something that is contrasting with the God of the Bible and you have chosen as an act of the will not to walk by faith, meaning in accordance with the faith that you already have. For instance, if you fear death as a Christian, then you're not walking in accordance with your faith. That means that you're not walking in accordance with, in a manner consistent with, God and some aspect of Himself in regard to His sovereignty, His love, His righteousness, His faithfulness, His omniscience, omnipotence, His omnipresence.

Next poster. To understand this fully, we're going back again and regress to an earlier teaching and look at the origin of choice to remind ourselves of this. God is; God is love; love is relational; relational is choice. If one choice is God, then any other choice is (by definition) ungodly. And that same choice is what every choice that you ever face is including the choice of whether to have fear of death. So viewed appropriately, every choice that we face is the same choice: the choice between God and ungod; a choice between how God views reality and how something from some other source views reality. So we're given this choice that it may be of love. Remember, what is love? Love is a passion for oneness. So how is a passion for oneness expressed? By simply choosing God rather than choosing ungod with each choice; thus every choice with which we are confronted is really only one more God given opportunity for us to simply reciprocate love by saying I choose You. I have more of a passion to be one with You,

my God, than I do a passion to be one with something else which exalts itself against You. When we choose something other than God, we are saying I love this other thing more than I love my God. I want to be one with this other thing more than I want to be one with my God. God fulfills His love for us by giving us choice and then by not violating our choice. As an act of love, He allows us the freedom to love things other than Himself more than Him. Remember how He related to the children of Israel in I Samuel 8:4-7 – God wanted to be their King; but they wanted an earthly king. So He gave them Saul, the king of their choosing; and He does likewise with us when we choose a king other than Himself. Because with every choice, we choose our king; and He gives us the desires of our heart.

So let's revisit the example of the fear of death. When we have fear we tend to view it as a faith failure. That's because we use walking by faith to mean empowered by. So when we say I have the fear of something, I was not empowered by faith sufficiently to overcome my fear of death; therefore, I have a faith failure and our response is to ask for more faith. Well, that's reasonable, that's good, and that's Biblical; but it's not complete. It's good in the sense that you acknowledged there was a failure of something; it's good that you see that your faith didn't seem to measure up and you recognize that faith comes from God; so you turn to God and ask for more faith, viewing Him as your resource. That's not bad; that's good. But we all know that the good is always the enemy of the best. So now, let's look for the best for the truth that sets us free from such things as looking at walking by faith by only one frame of reference as opposed to the two. Because I Corinthians 14:33 tells us for God is not a God of confusion. So if there's any confusion in the matter, it always comes from the mind of man; it never comes from God.

Matthew 16:19 – I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Now what Jesus was speaking there in the future tense is now past tense for us. He has given us keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. He's given us the key into the Kingdom (through His cross); He's given us the keys of how to function inside the Kingdom. We simply don't do a very good job of using the keys that He has given us. There are principles that work on this Earth and there are principles that work in the Kingdom of Heaven. We simply don't do a great job of applying our principles that we have been given. Luke 16:8 – Jesus says: For the sons of this age (the unbelievers those still in the world) are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light are. Paraphrased, in other words, those who are children of this world are better at applying the principles of this world than the children of God are at applying the principles of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Recall, we're talking about faith. We're talking about faith that we tend to use as walking by faith meaning empowered by. We're talking about the fear of death as a faith failure. But now let's move on and look at other principles that relate to the Kingdom of God and how it functions.

We tend to look at a principle in the Bible when we see it as a separate and distinct principle. A key revelation is that these various principles can be distinguished; but they can never be separated because they are locked together. They all play a role in what we have viewed historically as a faith failure. But we'll see that what we call a faith failure, most of the time is a stewardship failure. We have failed to be good stewards of the keys

of the Kingdom of Heaven that we have been given. Luke 16:10 – He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much. So the revelation of your faithfulness is what you do with little things. You can never be faithful over big things if you have a habit pattern of being unfaithful over little things. Matthew 25:21 – He who is faithful over little things, I will make master over many things. So what little things are we to be faithful over? Well, our common mistake is to contemplate big things rather than little things. We don't see that each big thing is made up out of many little things. So what are those little things that make up the big things that we're to be faithful over? II Corinthians 10:5 – we're taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. So the little things that we're to be faithful over are our thoughts. Fear of death is a conglomeration of thoughts; and unless each of its component smaller thoughts is allowed to roam freely, the fear of death cannot exist. Well what are the smaller thoughts? Well, I'll mention just a couple. Philippians 1:21 – To die is gain. Acts 2:24 – It was impossible for the grave to hold Him. You see, one cannot as a Christian have the fear of death unless prior thoughts of to die is loss are allowed to roam freely within the unrenewed mind, not being captured unto the obedience of Christ which says to die is gain. One cannot have fear of the grave unless prior thoughts that the grave can somehow hold us are allowed to roam freely in competition with the thoughts expressed by the Word of God which is how God views reality that it was impossible for the grave to hold Jesus, and likewise, it will be impossible for the grave to hold you. You cannot have the fear of death unless preliminary thoughts of the grave holding me and to die being loss are being allowed to roam freely. So we see the fear of death as the thing; but really it was all those component thoughts that you allowed through passivity to roam freely for the past few days, years, decades, and so on that built themselves ultimately to explode into the fear of death when challenging circumstances come.

Look again at the principle of love. God is love; love is a passion for oneness; He gave us choice so the relationship can be of love and not one of robotic slavery. Every choice is a God given opportunity to choose God; and thus, to reciprocate God's love by saying I love You too. I have a passion to be one with You too. And I demonstrate that...how? By choosing You rather than choosing something that's exalting itself against You in opposition to You. So what makes up each choice that we face? It's our present thought. God says to die is gain. We have a choice. When having the fear of death, we can say to die is loss and say oh, my thoughts are higher than Your thoughts. Or we can agree by saying to die is gain. But when we say to die is loss, having the fear of death, then we're simply choosing ungod rather than choosing God; then we say to God, my faith in death is greater than my faith in You; my love of death is greater than my love of You; because if not, I could not be agreeing with all these thoughts that are exalting themselves against what You told me. When we say to die is gain, we are choosing God; and thus, saying I choose You, I love You and I have a passion to be one with You. You and Your Word are one; they can be distinguished but not separated; so when I choose Your Word, I am choosing You. And that's how I'm exhibiting my passion to reciprocally express my love to You because I know You first loved me. I love You that much; at least enough to capture my next thought that is exalting itself in contrast to how You view reality.

Galatians 6:7 – Whatever a man sows, this he also will reap—another principle in the Kingdom of Heaven—the law of sowing and reaping. So what do we sow? Each thought. What do we reap? More thoughts like the original thought that we sowed. Well how does that relate to the fear of death? When we sow a thought such as to die is loss, then we will simply reap a harvest of more thoughts that flow out of that original thought. Thus, our fear of death will grow. But when we sow to die is gain, then our fear of death will diminish. Because when we sow the Word of God, we are sowing God Himself and God Himself assures the growth because His Word will not return to Him void. Mark 4: 26-27 – The Kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil and goes to bed at night and gets up by day and the seed sprouts up and grows, he himself does not know how. See, we don't know how this seed grows; but it does grow. So the seed that we sow, of course, is the Word of God; the Word of God explains that's what the seed is. So our job is to sow; the seed's job is to grow. We can't make it grow; we don't even know how it grows. But we can sow and if we're not sowing, how can we pray for the growth? The law of sowing and reaping contains some corollary principles attached to it. Matthew 7:17 – A bad tree brings forth bad fruit. In other words, like begets like. When the fear of death is present, it's the fruit of prior thoughts. What brought forth that fruit? A tree of bad thoughts rooted in a soil of bad thoughts that are exalting themselves against how God views reality as revealed in His Word. They're bad because they are contrary to God.

Another corollary principle is Isaiah 56:12 – Tomorrow will be like today, only more so. In other words, whatever we are allowing to roam freely, uncontested and unchallenged in our thought life today, will ensure that tomorrow will be like today, except only more so. If I allow lustful thoughts to roam freely in my thought life and fantasy today, I can guarantee you tomorrow I will fantasize and lust even more in my unrenewed mind. If we have an uncaptured fear of death today, then tomorrow will contain even more fear of death. He's given us a sword that we're to use, you see, not to be passive about. You may say, well, that sounds like positive thinking. Well, it should sound like it; but it's more than that. Spiritual principles, remember, can be applied even by the lost. They still apply. The difference is the following: The application of spiritual principles such as positive thinking, apart from God, will lead you further apart from God. Because when you think positively apart from God, the likelihood of success is enhanced and the greater your success apart from God, the less likely you are to know you have a need for God, then the less likely you are to turn and go to God. So positive thinking apart from God is negative thinking; because positive thinking apart from God leads to what you think is a positive outcome while leading you further from God and that's a negative thinking, you see. So the spiritual principles of God applied in the children of God lead us progressively into oneness with God including, of course, ultimately oneness with God for all eternity. So it's good to see the similarity between the power of positive thinking; but it's also even more important to see the difference because in the child of God, using the Word of God, it brings him closer to God to fulfill the love of God. But positive thinking applied by the world apart from God leads to a greater chance of success and leads you further from God; because now you think you have even less need of God.

How about the principle of agreement? Genesis 11:6 – and this is back at the tower of Babel. And the Lord said behold they are one people and they have the same language. And this is what they began to do; to build this tower toward Heaven and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. That's the power of positive thinking and people operating in agreement. He's talking to the heathen here. Yet God has given testimony of the power of agreement and positive thinking and vision and goal setting even among the heathen. That principle does apply in our horizontal relationship with each other even apart from God. For example: Osama Bin Laden could not have brought down the World Trade Centers by himself. But with many others operating in the power of agreement, they succeeded in their common purpose. So what is the ultimate principle of agreement? It's to apply the principle of agreement vertically by agreeing with God. Basically to say, Your ways are higher than my ways; Your thoughts are higher than my thoughts; because when you choose to have a thought and let a thought roam freely that's in opposition to God, what you're saying is my thoughts are higher than the thoughts of God. My ways are higher than the ways of God. But when we agree with God that He's the source of all truth, basically we say I will agree with God in this situation. And that's an act of worship by agreeing that His thoughts are higher than any other thoughts that you can possibly have. You either do that or you agree with something else in opposition to God. Apply that to the fear of death. What's your choice? I will agree that to die is gain; or I will disagree by saying that to die is great loss. I will agree that God has the final say because He has the power to subject all things to Himself, including death; or I will disagree by saying that death has the final say. I'll agree that God is more powerful than death; or I will disagree by saying that death is more powerful than God. So I don't believe in the resurrection.

Now come back into focus with the subject for today which is walking by faith. Here's the key point. When we have a faith failure, we respond by asking for more faith. Well that's good; but it's incomplete. We respond that way because we're focused on walking by faith as meaning empowered by. But there are two legs we're to walk on when we walk by faith. One is empowered by. We tend not to examine the other side of the coin, which means walking by faith in accordance with, in a manner consistent with that which I have faith in. So as we pray for more faith appropriately, the key question to ask ourselves is, have I walked in accordance with the faith that I already have? So you can ask stepwise questions to answer that question. Did I capture every thought in obedience to Jesus Christ? Am I being faithful over the little thing of this present thought? That I've viewed each thought as a God given opportunity to choose Him; and thus, to reciprocate love to Him? What did I sow to reap this fruit of my present thought? Did I tolerate thoughts all along the way that disagreed with the Word of God? Did I not have enough faith? Or, by an act of the will, did I simply refuse to walk in a manner consistent with the faith that I already have? In other words, was this a faith failure? Or, was this a faithfulness failure? That is the question to be asked. God gives faith; we release faith. When He gives us faith, it is powerful; it is living; it is active. The Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword; it will empower us. But the power is released when we, as an act of the will, begin to walk in accordance with the faith that we already have. His grace is sufficient; but we access the sufficiency of His grace by agreeing that it's sufficient and beginning to walk as if it's sufficient rather than waiting for God while we

have a passive attitude about the whole thing. We walk in accordance with it by calling it to mind, setting the mind on it, meditating on it, capturing every thought that exalts itself against it, speaking it to ourselves, speaking it to others, and bringing our behaviors in line with how God views reality because whether I feel it or not His thoughts are higher than my thoughts. And I'm going to reject mine flowing out of my unrenewed mind and walk in the light of His because of Who He is and how He views this reality regardless of circumstances.

None of that requires more faith. All of that is our responsibility. That's what constitutes walking by faith meaning in accordance with. Only then is the faith which we have now released to empower us. It's like if we have food to eat and we don't eat it; but we pray for more food. Well I seem to have inadequate nourishment. Of course you do; you're refusing to walk over and take a bite and chew it and swallow it. It's there. It's got the power. But you have to engage to release the power of the nutrition in that food. It's that simple.

So what I want you to see as a result of this teaching is that walking by faith has two components that can be distinguished but not separated. Walking by faith meaning empowered by cannot ever be separated from walking by faith meaning in accordance with. And to do both of those is to walk by faith. Now when you walk in accordance with and then pat yourself on the back for doing such a great job, you're now stealing the glory of God. Whenever you choose Him, you're to give Him the glory that you chose Him, you see. Because no flesh should ever exalt itself against God; no flesh should claim part of God's glory because God alone is worthy of glory; it's His truth, His revelation of that truth and so on. So who are you to take the glory of God when you walk in obedience to what He has said? So you choose Him and give Him the glory that you chose Him, you see. To do otherwise is to steal part of His glory.

So in the next session, we'll begin to take it to the next level and that is to introduce the level of aggression to the process by learning how to contend to walk by faith including in its fullness of in accordance with and empowered by and aggressively so. We do that to fulfill Philippians 3:14 – where Paul wrote. This is Paul now, the great apostle, the one who wrote half the New Testament. I press on toward the mark, pedal to the metal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, you see. Because after salvation, brothers and sisters, there's an upward call—not a call to passivity, and saying if God wants it, He'll bring it to pass. We give God the glory, but we come in and engage in the process by taking the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and turning the key in that lock to activate and release the process by walking in agreement with, reciprocating love with, walking by faith in, you see, sowing and reaping and so on, capturing every thought that exalts itself in vain imagination against how God views reality as revealed in His Word. That's our participatory part in the walking by faith.

Thank you for listening.