



Christian Life Fellowship

Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



Faith and the Promises of God

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Introduction:

We spoke last Sunday about being justified by faith and that happens because God said it happens when we believe. God has spoken in many ways. He has spoken through the prophets in times past. He has spoken through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He has spoken through the scriptures. He has spoken through dreams and visions. He speaks in times of prayer.

I. When God speaks – He wants us to believe what He says.

In [Genesis 15](#) - the conversation God had with Abraham was recorded. Here God made promises to Abraham about the son he would father. God gave Abraham His word, His promise, His honor, His commitment. When God speaks, things happen. Abraham was courageous enough to believe God! [Hebrews 11:11-12 ; 17-19](#) - Abraham acted in trust and obedience to what God told Him to do. What good is it if God speaks and we don't act? What faith is demonstrated in that regard?

God spoke into existence everything that we see. He created it with His word. There is nothing that takes the place of hearing and knowing His voice. If we don't hear His voice, then we are unable to respond, to do His bidding, or respond to do His will. It becomes vital, life-changing for us to listen and hear from Him. Jesus said, "My sheep know my voice and they follow me." So often we think God has to say things in loud ways.

In [I Kings 19:11-12](#) - Elijah had an encounter with God. He felt he was the only prophet left who was

servicing God and not bowing his knee to idols. God instructed Elijah to go stand on the mountain and there was a strong wind, an earthquake and a fire. But God was not in all those tremendous manifestations of power. He spoke in a still, small voice. This is generally the way God speaks to people: in a still, small voice. A voice that is quiet, calm and recognizable.

So how does God speak to you? How do you hear His voice? Are you listening? Are you responding to what He has spoken? God wants us to respond, so He speaks and continues to speak. We need to tune our ears to hear His voice so we can respond.

II. Faith and Works

Last week we revisited the truth that there is absolutely nothing we can do to earn our redemption or to work to secure for ourselves the salvation that God offers to us. On the other hand, our faith that is alive and active has to be accompanied by good works or it is worthless and dead. In [Romans 4:4-7](#)- Paul uses the opportunity here to bring the spotlight on works and let everyone know that if Abraham were justified by his works, then the reward and blessing of God would have been something he

earned and so his believing would have had no part in his justification.

James 2:20-23 - When will you ever learn that faith that does not result in good deeds is useless? Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was declared right with God because of what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

You see, he was trusting God so much that he was willing to do whatever God told him to do. His faith was made complete by what he did—by his actions. And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: **"Abraham believed God, so God declared him to be righteous."** He was even called "the friend of God." Abraham, a man of faith, was not made right with God through his works. He was made right with God by believing God's promises. He did not boast in who he was, what he did, or what he knew. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Think with me of how God spoke to Abraham and told him to offer his only son Isaac as a sacrifice. Isaac was his only promised son and Abraham and Sarah had raised him up through adolescence to young manhood and it was through Isaac that the promise of a Savior would come to pass. Abraham acted in faith on God's promises and found God's provision and favor. I don't believe it is possible to have living faith and not do something with that faith for God. The book of Hebrews talks about Abraham as a man of faith. He had flaws. He broke God's laws. But he trusted God and took God at His word and acted on what God said. God saw fit to justify Abraham even though Jesus hadn't been born or died yet.

James 2:26 Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead without good deeds.

God paid the price to redeem us so we have a purpose and understand how to redeem the days that God gives to us. Teach us to number our days oh Lord that we might have a heart of wisdom. God redeemed us so that we could share the joy of forgiveness and redemption with others.

Paul describes it this way. When we work, we don't look at the pay and say, what a nice gift that this person is giving to me. We get paid for the job that we have done. The pay is our compensation for our

effort, time, energy, creativity, diligence, production etc. The employer is obligated legally and morally to compensate the people who work for him for the job they have done. There is no way that we could expect God to pay us favorably for the life we have lived, without it being a gift. If we could really work to earn our way to God's favor and heaven, Jesus never would have had to come and die.

III. Wavering and Unbelief

One of the places where the enemy of our soul and the opposition to advancement in God's kingdom and in your own personal life happens is the place of doubt and unbelief. Our faith must tenaciously grip the promise of God. The children of Israel spent 40 years wandering around in the wilderness because of their unbelief. God said, go take this land; but Israel looked at the things that overwhelmed them in the natural. They looked at the obstacles, they looked at their circumstances and they looked through eyes of limitation rather than eyes of faith.

James 1:6-8 But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do. James tells us that if we doubt, we are like a ship that is tossed about on every wave that hits it. If there is nothing solid for a ship to be anchored too, it will drift and be moved by every wave that comes its direction.

So it is with our faith. If our faith is solidly anchored to the truth of what God has promised, no storm coming our direction will be able to move us. We don't have to be afraid, because we are anchored to a rock that will hold us steady. We don't have to be afraid because we believe what God said.

Unbelief limits what you allow God to do in you and through you. In Jesus' ministry, there were places he went where He did not do too many miracles because of the unbelief of the people there. If you want to limit God and doubt and not believe, you will limit how God can use you and what God wants to do through you. You will be less effective because of your unbelief.

Romans 4:20-21 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was absolutely convinced that God was able to do anything he promised. God made good on His promises to Abraham, because he believed and trusted God even when it looked impossible. I have a word for those of you who are sitting here this morning, not sure if what God promised is going to happen. Listen well. When God speaks, consider it done! God has spoken. Our part is cooperating in belief. Our part is trusting. Our part is responding and acting in confidence that what He said will happen, calling those things that are not as though they were. He will be faithful to you and He will accomplish all He has promised. His word will not return void.

If God could take care of a widow who had no money to pay her bills by causing a small vial of oil

Conclusion:

My challenge by God's spirit this morning is to call us to believe and act in faith. Perhaps your faith is being tested or you have wavered and vacillated in believing. If that is you, repent of it. Unbelief is sin. Then grip onto what God has promised and never let go! NO MATTER WHAT!

God has some great things in store for you personally and for this fellowship. Will we act on what He tells us or waver in disbelief? Will we look through natural eyes and thereby limit God or will we rise up with eyes of faith and walk into the reality of what God says is possible with HIM!

We are going to have a season of prayer this morning. I call you to prayer. We talked last week about being justified by faith. We have a pure, innocent standing with God. Listen to these scriptures as we prepare for prayer this morning.

Proverbs 15:29 - The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayers of the righteous.

James 5:16 - Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.

Matthew 21:22 - If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.

to keep flowing and flowing and flowing, He can take care of you. If God could take care of his prophet when there was a famine and send ravens to bring him food and sustain him, God can take care of you. If God could heal the lame man who sat by the pool for years waiting for the waters to be troubled, He can heal you. Jesus warned us that before He returned, there would be a falling away from faith. Guard your faith well. Believe and act on what He has spoken.

Hebrews 3:12-14 Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called "today," so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.