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Introduction

For a book with this title, we couldn't not start it with this scripture found in **Ephesians 2:8-9**, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."*

I came into "Word of Faith" circles in the early 1980's, about the same time I heard the Lord calling me to pastoral ministry. About that same time, my wife and I, along with our one year old son, began attending Word of Life Fellowship in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. It was there that we became aquatinted with Pastor David Emigh, one of the greatest pastors and Bible teachers I have ever known. He became our pastor until he went to heaven in 2011. We sat under his teaching for nine years, until we moved to New Mexico, with his blessing, to plant Word of Life Carlsbad.

Pastor David, as we affectionately called him, was a student of the late Kenneth E. Hagin. Though I never personally knew Brother Hagin, I was privileged to meet him once while serving as Pastor David's Associate Pastor. Though I did not attend his, Rhema Bible Training Center, I often felt like I did, because of his influence through Pastor David.

I say all that to give credit to, and to honor great men that have had a great influence in my life and ministry, and who taught me so much. Over the years there have been many others I could speak about as well.

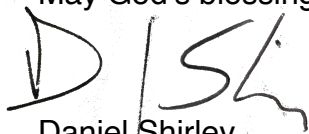
When it comes to the subject of grace and faith, I have read and heard much teaching on faith, and on grace, but very little on how grace and faith are partners, and work together. That is the reason and the motivation for this book. When we teach faith without the revelation of grace to go along with it, we miss some vital truths that make faith work.

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When I first began to receive the revelation of grace, I asked the Lord, “Why didn’t You teach me this a long time ago?” His answer was, “Until you learned the principles of faith, you were not capable of believing things that don’t make sense to the natural way of thinking.” So the first thing I want to say on this subject is, grace goes against the religious mind, but faith makes it possible to believe it.

So buckle up and get ready for some revelation that will revolutionize your life.

May God’s blessing upon your reading



Daniel Shirley

Chapter One: The Author and Finisher

As I considered how to begin this vital teaching in this crucial subject of “faith,” I recalled a statement from a teaching I heard many years ago. “We cannot begin to teach any subject without first defining our terms.” I would love to give credit for the statement, but I simply don’t know where it came from. So let’s define faith. How can we improve on God’s own definition? So with that said, let’s go to **Hebrews 11:1**.

You can’t get any more basic in the teaching of faith, than to define what it is. **Hebrews 11:1** *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* The words “now” and “is” put this passage in the present tense. When it says, “now”, It is not a filler word. American, English speakers, in casual conversation, use a lot of filler words that actually don’t contribute to the meaning of what we are about to say. An example of this would be when someone begins a sentence with, “Like, you know...”. Those are filler words that actually mean nothing to the sentence. Sometimes “now...” is used in that way. But there are no filler words in the Bible. Every word has purpose and is deliberate. Many times in scripture, we see sentences begin with, “therefore.” This tells us there was something said before, that the following statement results from. “Now,” in this verse is much like that.

When **Hebrews 11:1** says, “*now*,” it literally means, at the present time. It indicates continuance of a previously stated thought or idea. Given that this is the first word of the first verse of the 11th chapter, we will have to back up to previous chapters to find out what is being continued. We can’t skip this. In fact, as I went back to find the beginning of the thought being communicated, I kept having to back up

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further, and ended up at **Hebrews 1:1-2**, *“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”*

Holy Spirit here takes us all the way back to creation, that it was through His Son that God created the worlds. **Hebrews 11:3** says, *“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”* Notice, it is *“by faith we understand...”* Just two verses earlier we see faith is, currently, presently, at this very moment, *“the evidence of things not seen.”*

Verse 3 says, *“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.”* Don’t let the word “worlds” throw you. This verse is not talking about the universe, stars, planets, etc. If that were the case, the writer would have used the Greek word, “kósmos,” but he did not. We know from Genesis that God did indeed speak the “kosmos” into existence, so I’m not disputing that He did, but that is not what this verse is talking about. The writer instead uses the Greek word, “aión.” This word refers to an age, or period of time. It is by faith that we understand that the ages of time were “framed” by the Word of God. The words “framed” is translated from the Greek word, “katartízō,” meaning, to complete thoroughly, to repair or adjust:—fit, frame, mend, or perfectly join together, to prepare or restore.

When Adam fell, in **Genesis 3**, all of creation was thrown into a state of chaos. **Romans 8:20-21** says, *“For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected [it] in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”* Immediately after the

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fall, God began to introduce His Word (Jesus, God the Word that became flesh — **John chapter 1**) into the World. Then according to **Galatians 4:4**, *“when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”* By the entrance of the Word of God, He began to “frame,” to restore creation. Line upon line (**Isaiah 28:10** *“For precept [must be] upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.”*), through millenniums of time, with His Word spoken to prophets, He methodically began to frame the age in which we live. Then in **Luke 4:18-21** Jesus made the announcement *“The Spirit of the LORD [is] upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to [the] poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” 20 Then He closed the book, and gave [it] back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

Again, **Hebrews 1:1-2** says, *“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by [His] Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”* The words Jesus, the Son spoke in **Luke 4** that day, were first spoken to the fathers by the prophet Isaiah.

Now see this, in **Hebrews 12:2**, *“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of [our] faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”* Jesus, was the Word spoken in the garden immediately after the fall, **Genesis 3:15** *“And I will put enmity between you and*

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*the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” And Jesus was the Word speaking the Word in **Luke 4**, and He is the one who on the cross, in **John 19:30** said, “*It is finished!*” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” And He is the Word who in **Hebrews 10:12**, “*after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.*” Do you see it, He is the “*author and finisher of [our] faith?*”*

Now two verses we’ve looked at already, but we need to extract some more truth. **Hebrews 11:1** says, “*Now faith IS!*” And **Hebrews 12:2** says, “*looking unto Jesus, the author and FINISHER of [our] faith.*” Faith “*IS,*” in the present, because it has been “*FINISHED.*”

“*Now faith is the substance....*” Substance is the matter, or material that something is made of. If you are sitting in a wooden chair, wood is the substance of the chair. It is what the chair is made of. Whatever it is you hope for, faith will give substance to it. What hope sees as a possibility, faith sees as reality. Look at the **Amplified Classic Edition of Hebrews 11:1**. “*NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].*”

“*Faith is the substance of things hoped for.*” Now look at what Paul prayed for the Ephesian believers. **Ephesians 1:18**, “*the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*” “*The eyes of your understanding...*” And by faith you, what? *Understand!* ...that your world, your time and place in history were framed, completed thoroughly, repaired or

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adjusted:—fit, mended, and perfectly joined together, prepared and restored.

It's what you hoped for, but now you have believed the word God has spoken to frame your world, and faith has now given substance to it. Faith has become the "*evidence of things not seen*" with physical eyes, but your spirit eyes see it. What hope sees as a possibility, faith sees as a reality. You cannot understand this statement until you understand the finished work of Jesus.

Let's look at that last phrase at the end of **Hebrews 11:3**, "*so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*" The substance of anything is what it is made of. Notice what **verse 2** says, "*For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.*" In other words, their testimony, which is seen, was made of an invisible substance; invisible to physical eyes that is, which is visible to the "*eyes of your understanding*" (**Ephesians 1:18**). Now look at **Hebrews 11:27**, speaking of Moses "*By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.*" It did not say Moses saw the promised land. Much of our faith teaching has been about visualizing the thing we are believing God for, see yourself driving that new car you're believing God for, see yourself walking in the front door of that house, seeing your name on the mailbox, see your family enjoying the house. But notice what Moses saw. He wasn't imagining the ¹cluster of grapes, or the

¹ **Numbers 13:23** *Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. [They] also [brought] some of the pomegranates and figs.*

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pomegranates and figs. He wasn't imagining the ²milk and honey. He was seeing Him who is invisible, who is Christ.

Maybe you're thinking, but this was centuries before Jesus even came. How could Moses be seeing Him? Hebrews says He did. In **Exodus 2:1-10** we read the story. *"And a man of the house of Levi went and took [as wife] a daughter of Levi. 2 So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he [was] a beautiful [child,] she hid him three months. 3 But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid [it] in the reeds by the river's bank. 4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. 5 Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. 6 And when she opened [it,] she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.' 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?' 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go.' So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 9 Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give [you] your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed him. 10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, 'Because I drew him out of the water.'"*

Notice here that though Moses was raised in Pharaoh's house, his own mother nursed him as an infant. I can only

² **Numbers 13:27** *Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this [is] its fruit.*

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imagine that while she nursed him, she told him of his great uncle Joseph, and how God, by him, had brought him to Egypt and spared their people. Uncle Joseph was a type of Christ.

Joseph was betrayed by his brothers, thrown into a pit, a type of the tomb where Jesus was buried. They had actually discussed killing him. Jesus was actually killed by His brethren, and buried in a tomb that was borrowed from a man named Joseph³. Joseph became a household servant in Egypt. In **Matthew 20:28** Jesus said *“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”* In one day Joseph went from prison to the palace of Egypt. In one day Jesus went from the grave to the Holy of Holies in heaven. Joseph was one of twelve brothers, the sons of Jacob/Israel. Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. We could go on and on talking about the typology of Jesus that we see in the story of Joseph.

Genesis 50:25-26 says, *“Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.’ 26 So Joseph died, [being] one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.”* And **Exodus 13:19** says, *“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence*

³ **Matthew 27:57-59** *Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. 59 When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,*

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with you.” Just as Joseph’s grave in Egypt is empty, Jesus’ grave in the garden outside Jerusalem is empty.

Hebrews 11:27 says Moses saw Him, Christ. How will you obtain a good testimony? By seeing Him... His finished work. **2 Corinthians 3:18** says, *“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* So thorough is this transformation that **1 John 4:17** says, *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.”* If you truly understand what happens when you see Him, you will stop trying to see stuff and the cry of your heart will be, “Holy Spirit, reveal Jesus to me.

This is the essence of faith; **Hebrews 12:2** *“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of [our] faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Chapter Two: Does Faith Move God?

I have heard it preached many times, and have preached it myself in days gone by, that faith moves God. We, meaning, those of us in Word of Faith circles, have said, “God us not moved by your need. If He were, there would be no poverty, sickness, etc.” The truth is, God was moved by the need He knew we would have. He knew the time would come that you would need healing, and it moved Him to lay your sickness, disease and pain on Jesus. God knew you would need a sacrifice for sin, so He *“laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6)* So, yes, He was moved by our need. But then we continued with, “God is only moved by faith.” Now we cannot overemphasize the importance of knowing and believing His Word, and what it says about your situation. When you pray, it is vital that you know that what you are praying is in line with what the Word says, and furthermore, that you believe what the Word says. But is it for the purpose of moving God?

We use language like, “God is moving,” or “God showed up.” Now I don’t want to get all legalistic on the other side of this thing, but I do want to help you adjust your thinking. The truth is, God was moved by our need, but He is not moved today by your need— or by your faith. He moved on your behalf before you were a twinkle in your daddy’s eye... actually, before creation. **Hebrews 10:11-13** says, *“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.”* My question is, why do we need Him to move? God knew before creation what you would need, and it moved Him.

Revelation 13:8 says, *“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* This is a statement I refer to often, because I want you to understand, God moved once, and He can’t “unmove!” God moved once, and it was enough. What God did in Christ was enough for all people, for all time. Jesus sat down because He was finished, and He will sit, *“waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.”* **Hebrews 10:12-14** says, *“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”*

Look at how **The Mirror Study Bible** translates **Hebrews 10:13** *“His seat of authority is established upon the fully realized, prophetic expectation that every opposing threat to human life was made the resting place of his feet.”*

In **Matthew 6:7-8** Jesus teaches us, *“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen [do.] For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”* So what were those heathen Jesus speaks of doing? They thought they would be heard because they prayed a lot. Furthermore, it seems they felt that God needed to be informed of what they needed. But Jesus said He already knows.

I’m sure you have heard people say, “God is no respecter of persons. If He did it for them He will do it for me.” We often thinking that is faith. But faith actually says, “if He did it for them, He did it for me.” That is a critically important statement. Read it again. If He did it for them, He, by the one sacrifice, did it for them and for me at the same time, by

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the same work, on the same cross. One sacrifice was enough for all people, for all time. I thinking this idea of, He will do the same for me, would describe vain repetitions.

God doesn't practice vain repetitions. If one sacrifice was enough, He will surely not repeat it. And if He will not repeat it, why would we ask Him to do it again, to do for me what He did for someone else? If He did it again, how would He do it? The same way He did it before, by sending Jesus to die on a cross. It will never happen again! There is no faith in that request. If He did it again, it would be a vain, or unnecessary repetition, and it is vain for you to ask Him to.

Romans 6:8-10 says, *"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For [the death] that He died, He died to sin once for all; but [the life] that He lives, He lives to God."*

The words, "vain repetitions," is translated from a single word in the Greek, "battologéō." The first part of this word is "báttos." This word describes a stammerer, or stutterer. It means to prate— talk at great length but with little meaning. The last part of this compound word is "lógos." This is a word that most people who are accustomed to this kind of Bible teaching are familiar with. It is usually translated as "word." When put together we are depicting a person who, usually involuntarily, repeats words, or sounds

Jesus told us, those heathen keep repeating the same thing over and over again, because they don't understand that Father already knew before they asked. Many Christians are like three years olds... can I please? Can I please? Can I? Can I? We have not understood that Father saw today from the foundation of the world, and because it is His fatherly nature to supply needs and give good gifts, the slightest

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move from you in His direction is met with His overflowing abundance of favor.

If at first you don't succeed, try and try again? If you don't get it the first time, ask and ask again?

Sadly, we have pictured God as a cranky old man who says, "I have to make sure they learn the value of things... there's nothing free in this world... you know, teach them to work hard for what they want." We seem to think He wants to hear us beg and plead with Him. This is a purely religious mentality. The thinking is, you just keep asking, that God wants to see that you're really serious. I've heard it preached, "when you get desperate you'll do what is necessary to receive from God." It's almost like He gets some kind of joy out of seeing you flail around just to keep your head above water. But the problem with this kind of thinking is, we have mischaracterized Father. We have never really seen Him as Father. We continue to view Him as judge, therefore we feel that we are on trial, 24-7-365, that we must always be making our case before Him.

Jesus, who know the heart of His Father perfectly, had this to say in **Luke 12:24-34**. *"Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them."* Let's do what Jesus said here, let's consider the ravens. What is it about them He wants us to contemplate? What a powerful lesson on self effort. God feeds them without their contribution. We read this and think, God is so awesome, He takes care of birds. But birds are not the point Jesus is making here. He then says, *"Of how much more value are you than the birds?"* The birds are not trying to get God to move. Father takes care of them, not because they are birds, but because it is His nature to do so. God didn't create man and put him in a desert, and say,

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if you can get Me to move, “I’ll provide what you need.” No, He planted a garden before He created him.

Then Jesus goes further to emphasize to us the futility of this approach to Father. He said in **verse 25**, *“And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 “If you then are not able to do [the] least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27 “Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”* Let’s pause again for consideration. If King Solomon, as great as he was, could not, by his self effort, array himself like a simple flower of the field is arrayed, with no effort on their part, why are we always thinking we need to move God to do something for us. What did Jesus tell us to consider about the lilies? Consider *“how they grow.”* *“How?”* Do they do something to cause growth? Jesus is clearly teaching us about faith. He says so in the next verse.

I was taught that “faith is an act.” But Jesus is teaching us that faith should be comparable to how lilies grow. Today, I have an understanding of grace, and the marriage between grace and faith, and that brings me to a different conclusion that faith is a rest. Faith produces a response from us... an act, if you will, but nevertheless, faith is a rest. Think of this, what did you do to grow from your birth height, to your current height? How do lilies grow? Your stature increased by, not one cubit, but approximately three cubits, totally effortlessly. It was not by you worrying about it... just the same way as lilies grow.

Jesus says the lilies *“neither toil nor spin.”* The word *“toil”* is from the Greek word, “kopiáo,” which means, to feel fatigue; implying, from hard work. The **Amplified Bible** really describes the word *“spin”* well in how it translates this verse. It says, *“Consider the lilies and wildflowers, how they grow*

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*[in the open field]. They neither labor nor spin [wool to make clothing]; yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory and splendor dressed himself like one of these.” In **verse 28** Jesus tells us that all of our self effort is “little faith.”*

Now go on to **verse 28**. *“If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **HOW MUCH MORE [WILL HE CLOTHE] YOU, O [you] of little faith?**”* Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, has something to say to us here about faith. He says, (**verse 29**) *“And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 “For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.”* Jesus is telling us emphatically, “do not seek” these things. The word “seek” is translated from the Greek word, “zētēō,” Strong’s Concordance defines this word as “to seek, to worship (God), or (in a bad sense) to plot (against life):—be (go) about, desire, endeavour, enquire (for), require, seek after, seek for, seek means).” Jesus is telling us that the nations of the world are occupied with, as if in worship of these things... the necessities of life, what they will eat, drink and wear. This is their devotion, their passion, their pursuit.

But look at what Paul says to the Philippians, **Philippians 3:18-20**. *“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, [that they are] the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end [is] destruction, whose god [is their] belly, and [whose] glory [is] in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”* Notice, Paul said, “whose god is their belly.” That sounds like seeking what they shall eat.... Paul says they “set their mind on earthly things.” He told the **Colossians, chapter 3, verses 1-3**, *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ*

*is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” The word for “seek” here is the same word we’ve been talking about from **Luke 12**. The **Contemporary English Version** captures this so well. It reads, “You have been raised to life with Christ. Now set your heart on what is in heaven, where Christ rules at God’s right side.” And the **Bible in Basic English** says, “If then you have a new life with Christ, give your attention to the things of heaven, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.”*

Jesus said, in **Luke 12:31**, “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” But let’s not leave this train of thought here. Let’s finish it out. Jesus goes on in **verses 32-34** with this, “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 “Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Remember, Jesus is teaching us faith. That **32nd verse** really sums up some things for us... “Do not fear...” How is that possible? Remember the ravens, remember the lilies. If you set your heart, your attention, on what you are going to eat, drink, or wear, fear cannot be avoided. The nations, speaking of those who have no relationship with Father, seek these things. But you “seek the kingdom of God.” Then Jesus said, “Sell what you have and give alms.” You can do that without stress and worry because you are not trusting in yourself, your treasure is not in a bank or in your self effort to provide. Much faith teaching has been about laying up the treasure. I remind you of what Jesus said in **Luke 12:24**, “Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor

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reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them.”

You see, it's not about having a storehouse or not having a storehouse on earth. We understand that we have a storehouse in Heaven, but for some reason we think it is our responsibility to stock that storehouse. We have used this scripture to motivate people to give more offerings... telling them that is how you lay up treasure in the storehouse. But notice what Paul wrote in **Philippians 4:19**, “*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*” The word translated, “*according to*,” is the Greek word, *katá*, meaning; to the charge of, out of the measure. It also carries the idea of something that descends forcefully, or in a dominating way. This word is also used in **Ephesians 4:22-24** “*that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to (kata) the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to (kata) God, in true righteousness and holiness.*” Here we see that there were, before you accepted Jesus, some things that descend upon you in a forceful, dominating way, by virtue of the fact that you were the offspring of Adam. But when you accepted Christ, you became a new creation in Him. You are no longer the offspring of Adam, but are now a child of God. And as His child, there are also some things that descend upon you, without your self effort, just by virtue of who you are in Him. These things come upon you naturally (your new nature... the divine nature). Here in Ephesians 4, Paul tells us to make a choice to put off, by the process of renewing your mind to who you now are, and choose instead, the righteousness and holiness that descends upon you from God. The use of the word “*kata*” tells us it is effortless on your part. Your only effort is the, “*be renewed in the spirit of your mind*,” part.

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In the same way, God supplies your need, the supply descending upon you from His heavenly storehouse, just like He nurtures the birds and lilies. With that definition in mind, let me paraphrase **Philippians 4:19** like this, *“And my God shall supply all your need to the charge of, out of the measure of, His riches in glory that have been laid up for you by Christ Jesus, and descend upon you, His child, without effort on your part, but because Jesus stocked the storehouse.”* God, by Christ Jesus, has laid up provision for you, and for all of His creation. The birds eat from his provision every day. We are not to set our heart on provision, but on the Provider, not on the gift, but on the Giver.... We are to give our attention to Him and His kingdom. This is real, Bible faith... like the birds, like the lilies.

Chapter Three: Faith is Your Response to God

Faith is not about trying to get the grumpy old man, who doesn't want to move, to get up from his lazy boy to do what we need him to do.

Ordinarily I like to refer to the **Amplified Translation** of the Bible, because of the way it expounds on words to give more clarity and understanding. But the following verses from the **Amplified** actually contribute to the problem here. It says, **(Matthew 7:7-8)** *“Ask and keep on asking and it will be given to you; seek and keep on seeking and you will find; knock and keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who keeps on asking receives, and he who keeps on seeking finds, and to him who keeps on knocking, it will be opened.”*

Many times when we look in Strong's Concordance to find the meaning of a word, it will give several ways that the Greek word can be translated. Sometimes Bible translators, though they mostly do good, occasionally will choose the worst possible word for the given context. The word for “ask” used here in **Matthew 7:7-8**, is the Greek word, “aitéo,” to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require. Notice, one way this word can be translated is, “beg.” Any of the other choices would have been better. I'm not saying it can never be translated as “beg,” but in the context here, it is a poor choice of English words to use. Can you see how we maybe arrived at this translation of the verse?

In **Mark 11:24** we find the same Greek word translated as “ask.” Notice how the **Amplified Bible** translated the same word in this verse. *“For this reason I am telling you, whatever things you ask for in prayer [in accordance with God's will],*

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believe [with confident trust] that you have received them, and they will be given to you.” Here we find no illusion to begging, or continual asking. Here Jesus simply says, “ask.” Look at the **New King James** translation of **Mark 11:24**.

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive [them,] and you will have [them.] When does Jesus tell us we should believe we receive? When you see the manifestation? When you have it in your hand? No, “When you pray!” So, if you believe you receive when you pray, or when you ask, why would you keep on asking?

Here is another passage that when misunderstood, gives people problems. **Luke 18:1-8** says, *“Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, 2 saying: ‘There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. 3 ‘Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ 4 ‘And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 ‘yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.” 6 Then the Lord said, ‘Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 ‘And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 ‘I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?’”*

Notice, **verse 1** tells us straight up, what this parable is about, *“that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.”* Jesus then proceeds to tell us a story about a woman seeking justice from an adversary. I am always amazed at how many Christians think Father God is the unjust judge here. That alone reveals a mischaracterization of Father. Why would anyone ever think that Jesus would use the word “unjust” to describe His Father? Jesus tells us that you can

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get what you need, even from an unjust judge if you are persistent enough. But your Father is NOT like that. He is the epitome of justice. How much more can we trust Him to take care of those who always pray, rather than a losing heart. Jesus didn't mean we should continuously and repetitively pray. He meant, every time you have a need, pray.

Then Jesus ends this parable with a question, *"Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"* Once again, the Amplified Bible gets this wrong and messes people up. It reads, *"...when the Son of Man comes, will He find [this kind of persistent] faith on the earth?"* When you fail to keep the main thing as the main thing, it messes up everything. When you make persistence the main thing in this story, you miss the main point that your Heavenly Father is not like the unjust judge. The unjust judge said, *"this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."* My paraphrase here, *"woman, you're starting to get on my nerves. I'm going to avenge you so you'll bug off."* That in no way describes Father God. He just wants you to have faith in Him to come to Him with everything. You are His child, *"His elect."* You do not annoy Him. **Luke 18:1** tells us the purpose of the parable... that we would pray, rather than becoming discouraged.

How can you respond appropriately to God if you see Him as an unjust judge? **Hebrews chapter 6** begins by listing six elementary principles of Christ that we must build upon, but move beyond in order to mature in our Christian life.

Hebrews 6:1-2 says, *"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary [principles] of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."*

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You don't throw these out after you establish them in your life. This does not mean that these principles are of value only until you are ready for maturity, but now you leave them behind. The verse actually says to leave the discussion of these things. You don't leave faith, toward God. You don't abandon it, you live by it. But you no longer need to have the discussion in order to establish it. It's like a child learning their colors. There is a time when parents are asking the child, "what color is that?" The child answers, "I allow." Mom says, "no, that's red." But soon when Mom asks, the child answers correctly; "what color is that?" "Red." Mom says, "that's right, you are so good." But in a few weeks or months they are no longer having that discussion. It doesn't mean they have abandoned their colors. It means they can now function with an assumption that the child knows how to select the correct ones when told to wear their red shirt.

You no longer need to establish your dependence on God, that you were saved by grace, through faith. You no longer need to discuss that your standing with God is based on the work of Christ, imputed to you. These principles have become a part of your thinking, they are now your default. You don't leave your *"faith toward God."* But you no longer need to ask, "can I trust Him?"

Then there is that older sibling that thinks it's funny to confuse their little brother/sister by telling them it's blue. We have those in the church too. They keep telling you that God is the unjust judge, so ask and keep asking, knock and keep knocking, beg and keep begging... They forget that Jesus said, in **Luke 18:8**, *"I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."*

The Mighty Hand of God!

Do you see the hand of the Lord as blessing? Most people do... At least sometimes. When something catastrophic happens, but we were protected, we say, "I could see the hand of God in that situation." Or maybe you look back over your life and see that the hand of God has always provided for and sustained you, many times when you didn't know how. But in **1 Peter 5:5** many see the word "*submit*," and immediately bow up. The verse says, "*Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to [your] elders...*" The problem is, we think of submission as someone telling us what to do, and human nature doesn't like that.

Read these three verses, then let's talk about them. **1 Peter 5:5-7**, "*Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to [your] elders. Yes, all of [you] be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.'* **6** *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*" The "*hand*" **verse 6** speaks of, is the "*elders*" spoken of in the previous verse.

Why humble yourself? Because God gives grace to the humble. God is gracious, but He can't give grace if you are prideful. Pride is water and grace is oil. If you are prideful, your pride will repel the grace He is pouring on you. You see, it's not about God choosing, no grace for you. God can't save someone who refuses His offer of salvation. There is no one to whom God has not extended grace, but some refuse grace. There are some that God can't save, because they refuse salvation. There are some who refuse forgiveness... who refuse their pardon.

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Did you know there is no such thing as an unpardonable sin? I assure you that you can't find it in the Bible... or we could say, all sin is unpardonable if you refuse the pardon. Holy Spirit cannot move you toward Christ if you refuse to move. That's what **Hebrews 10:26** means when it says, *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins."* It means Holy Spirit is doing His job of convincing you of sin⁴, except you refuse to be convinced that you need Jesus. Jesus is the only sacrifice that God accepts, so if you refuse Him, there is no other sacrifice, so He can't pardon you. That is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit because you reject His work.⁵ It doesn't mean God is incapable of forgiving you, or even that you have offended Him so egregiously that He refuses to forgive you. It means you have rejected the means by which He forgives. It means you're going to have to repent, change your stubborn mind and accept what He is offering. There is no sin that is bigger than Jesus' blood, but if you reject the blood of Jesus, and Holy Spirit who draws you to Christ, what is left?

My point is, when you refuse what God already did in Christ, there remains no more sacrifice. If you, by unbelief, refuse what God has already done in Christ, you refuse the benefit.

In case you didn't realize that unbelief is sin, I will tell you that all sin has unbelief at its root. I refer you to **John**

⁴ **John 16:8-11** *"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 'of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 'of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 'of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.'"*

⁵ **Matthew 12:31** *"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy [against] the Spirit will not be forgiven men."*

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16:8-9, *“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 “of sin, because they do not believe in Me.”* Refusal to believe in Jesus is refusal to accept what Holy Spirit is sent to convict, or convince you of. Christians have misunderstood the term “conviction (“convict” is better translated as “convince”) of the Holy Spirit.” They have thought it meant, to make you feel bad about something you have done wrong, to cause your conscience to bother you. But it actually means to persuade you that you have believed wrong about Jesus. That’s why this sin of unbelief is unpardonable without repentance, or change of mind. Until you change your mind from unbelief to belief, you cannot be pardoned. There is no action one can do or engage in that the blood of Jesus has not provided the propitiation for. But since we receive forgiveness by faith, if we refuse to believe, and we reject Holy Spirit’s work to persuade us, we cannot receive the forgiveness He offers.

Jesus said *“blasphemy [against] the Spirit will not be forgiven men.”* The word “blasphemy” is from the Greek word, “blasphēmía”, which can be translated as, “vilification (especially against God):—blasphemy, evil speaking.” One way Webster’s dictionary defines “vilify,” is “to lower in estimation or importance.” So blasphemy against Holy Spirit would be, to lower your estimation or the importance of His work of convincing you of the sin of unbelief. Essentially, to devalue His work. You devalue His work if you refuse to respond to it.

God gives grace to the humble. Notice, submission is an act of humility. The posture of humility is to acknowledge, “I need you.” Younger to older, because the younger’s existence depends on the older... to parents... you don’t exist without them. But it’s not just parents. It’s those who have put in the work, who laid the foundation you now build

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on, who prepared the way ahead of you. It's those who stand between you and the enemy, that see his plots to destroy you. That enemy may be an outside enemy that comes to dislocate you from your God given place, or it could even be your own choices that will harm or hinder you in your future progress and success.

Hebrews 13:17 says, *“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.”* This verse is not saying you should obey anyone who is older than you. It says they *“watch out for your souls,”* who have accepted a level of responsibility for you. Not everyone is watching for your soul.

1 Peter 5:7 says, *“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”* Pride and humility are opposites, or we could say, they are opposed to one another. Pride says, “I did this,” but humility acknowledges that someone else made a vital contribution to my success... parents, a Sunday school teacher, a coach, a pastor... That is the essence of what it means to receive grace. Grace is that I live because another (Jesus) died, I am accepted by God because on the cross, He was forsaken. God gives grace to the humble. It's not that He will not give grace to the proud, as if to say, “I detect pride, so I'm not going to give them grace.” The prideful are incapable of accepting grace. Grace by definition recognizes the contribution of another, and in the case of Jesus' contribution, He gave it all. You are nothing and can do nothing apart from Him.

1 Peter 5:6 goes on to say, *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”* This verse begins with *“therefore.”* That tells us that what is said in **verse 6** is contingent on what is said in **verse**

5, it is not a stand alone verse. Humble yourself because God *“resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.”*

Again, see **verse 6**. *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God...”* The hand of God, as we have been saying, speaks of those who cover, protect, provide for, who accept a level of responsibility for you, and thus have a level of authority in your life. Never give anyone authority in your life who has not invested in you. Being a charismatic communicator does not give them authority over you. Being a pastor of a great church doesn't make them your pastor. Being the next “up and comer” in the Christian world may earn them attention and respect, but it doesn't make them a father to you. Paul said in **1 Corinthians 4:15**, *“For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet [you do] not [have] many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”* I say that so you will understand, there are many who will seek to have preeminence in your life, but submit to those who have invested in building you.

The hand of God is for blessing and impartation. This is why there is a doctrine of “laying on of hands.”⁶ We lay hands on to impart blessing. Paul wrote to his young prodigy, Timothy, in **1 Timothy 5:22**, *“Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.”* Peter says, “humble yourself under the hand that has imparted to you...” If you will humble yourself under the hand that is meant to bless you, *“He (God) may exalt you in due time.”* And when you are under that hand of blessing,

⁶ **Hebrews 6:1-2** *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary [principles] of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

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you can do **verse 7**, *“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*

Maybe you are wondering what all of this has to do with the title of this chapter, “Faith is Your Response to God.” It is simply this; when I have faith toward God, I live in a place of trust and rest in Him. I can respond appropriately to Him because I trust Him, I trust His hand. You cannot walk in rebellion and faith at the same time. You can not resist the devil while you resist the hand that covers, protects and blesses you. If you will not humble yourself under the hand, God will not be able to exalt you. Matthew 10:40 (NKJV) “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. Matthew 10:40 (NKJV) “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. Jesus said, in **Matthew 10:40**, *“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”* Some rebellious souls will say, “I receive Jesus,” but they reject the one He sent to impart the blessing He sent. Responding to God often involves responding to the messenger He sent.

Chapter Four: Faith Always Says “Yes” to God

When you trust Father God, you can enter in to a place of rest. Life ceases to be stressful. Rest is the result of faith, faith is trust, and trust results from love. **1 John 4:16** says, *“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”* We can’t expect that someone would say “yes” to a God that they don’t know loves them, because they cannot know they can trust Him. John goes on to write, **(1 John 4:17-19)** *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.”*

Notice, perfect love, or when we understand how perfectly He loves us, eliminates the torment of fear and produces great boldness, by which we can say “yes” to whatever He asks of us. We will always struggle with the “yes,” until we understand we do not say “yes” to attain His love, but because He loves us. *“We have known and believed the love that God has for us...”* Therefore we have boldness to say “yes”. We are not afraid to say “yes.”

God is a Romantic

Webster’s Dictionary gives us several definitions of Romance. The one I want us to see here is, “romance” is a transitive verb, meaning, “to try to influence or curry favor with especially by lavishing personal attention, gifts, or flattery.” It seems the art of romance has been lost in our culture. It has been replaced by manipulation. Webster

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defines “manipulate” as, “to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means especially to one's own advantage.” God is a Romantic, not a manipulator. Let's see it in the story of Abraham.

I want to show you a progression in the life of Abraham, who we know as the father of faith. God wanted to initiate a covenant with him. But He did not speak to him about it in the beginning of their relationship. God needed a crucial “yes,” from him, as I will show you later, and God knew how to get that “yes.”

Abraham's story covers 16 chapters of the book of Genesis, and is spoken of in numerous other place in scripture. We cannot learn what we need to know about faith without lessons from his experience. I will tell you that Abraham did not do everything perfectly, and he did not always operate in faith. His story should encourage you.

Let's look at God's first recorded communication with Abram. He was not known as Abraham yet, because Abraham was his covenant name, and this was prior to the covenant. In **Genesis 12:1-3** we read, *“Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”*

Notice, God's initial appeal to him was rather inconsequential, “Come with Me, I want to show you something.” Why did God ask Abram to, “*Get out of his country...?*” God wanted to show Abram what He wanted to give him. “This you see right here... this is not it... come with Me... I want you to see this place.”

Genesis 12:5, *“Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.”* Did you notice, the Lord told him to get out from his family, but he took his nephew with him? It was like taking your younger brother, who is little and cute and funny, with you on a date. He gets all of the attention.

Abram’s deviation from this detail did not negate the promise of God, but as you will see in **chapter 13:1-11**, read it, the land could not support them both, so Abram had to divide the land with Lot, who took the best part. God wanted to give it all to Abram, but look at what happened in **Genesis 13:10-11**, *“And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it [was] well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.”* When you obey your modified version of what the Lord says, His grace will still take care of you, but it will cost you something.

Now continue with **Genesis 13:14-18**. *“And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: ‘Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are--northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 ‘for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 16 ‘And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, [then] your descendants also could be numbered. 17 ‘Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.’ 18 Then Abram moved [his] tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which [are] in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.”*

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Now this writing is not about relationships, dating and marriage, it's about faith. But you get a bonus in this chapter, because you get to see how God does romance. Ladies, never let a guy manipulate you, that is, to take unfair advantage of you in order to get what he wants. You are worth the romance... insist on it. This depicts the beginning of a romance.

Let's dig around a little more in these verses, with our new perspective in mind. **Genesis 12:1** "Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you." The Lord says, "come with me, I want to show you something." Have you ever heard that partial obedience is disobedience? We've established here that Abram did not completely obey. He did not get completely away from his family, he took Lot, his nephew with him. But notice, in **Hebrews 11:8**, Abraham's partial obedience was not called, "disobedience," it was still called "obedience." As I stated earlier, it did cost him something, but can you see grace here? Let's read, *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Why do I say Abram only partially obeyed God?

When I write, I always think of what I, as a reader who wants to learn, would want to know. I often hear preachers say things, and read statements in books that leave me wondering how they arrived at their position. I am determined to not do that to my readers. Whether you agree with me or not, whether you feel I have indisputably proved

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my point or not, you will at the very least, know how I got here. I try to share with you, the questions that came to my mind.

I wanted to know if it was fair to say Abram only partially obeyed God. Did he have an obligation to Lot that justified taking him with him when he left his country. I like to go with what I know from scripture. **Genesis 12:4** says, *“So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram [was] seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.”* Now don’t let the little two letter word, “as,” throw you off. It seems to say that Abram did exactly what the Lord had spoken. But that word in the Hebrew text is, “’āsher.” ⁷Strong’s Concordance shows several possible translations that could have been used. Look at how this same word was translated elsewhere in the **King James Version**... “which, wherewith, because, when, soon, whilst, as if, as when, that, until, much, whosoever, whereas, wherein, whom, whose.” According to the definition, it could have been translated as, “as soon as,” or “because.” What if the translators had used one of these other English words here? What if they said, “Abram departed because the Lord had spoken”? Or what if they said, “Abram departed as soon as the Lord had spoken”? This word does not necessarily mean He did exactly as the Lord had spoken.

⁷ ’āsher, ash-er'; a primitive relative pronoun (of every gender and number); who, which, what, that; also (as an adverb and a conjunction) when, where, how, because, in order that, etc.: — × after, × alike, as (soon as), because, × every, for, +forasmuch, + from whence, + how(-soever), × if, (so) that ((thing) which, wherein), × though, + until, + whatsoever, when, where (+ -as, -in, -of, -on, -soever, -with), which, whilst, +whither(-soever), who(-m, -soever, -se). As it is indeclinable, it is often accompanied by the personal pronoun expletively, used to show the connection.

This little phrase was another cue to me, *“and Lot went with him.”* The passage does not make the same kind of note about Sarai his wife, although he took her too. But that was to be expected. But it was not expected that Lot would go. We know Abram’s brother, Lot’s father, Haran, had died, so I wondered if Abram was now Lot’s guardian, and perhaps that’s why Lot went with him. If that had been the case, I think Abram would have been more than justified, in fact, probably obligated to take him. But I believe we have enough evidence from scripture to say that Lot was in fact a grown man when Abram departed. Some believe he may have been fifty years or older.

In **Genesis 13:5-7** we see the first indication that Lot was not a little boy, but a grown man. *“Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. 6 Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.”* The thing that struck me here is the amount of wealth that Lot had amassed, so much that Abram and Lot had to part ways because the land could not support them both. Part of that land was the lush plain of Jordan⁸. Furthermore, this occurred within ten years of their departure from Haran⁹. So it is obvious that Lot was wealthy before they left Haran.

⁸ **Genesis 13:10** *And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it [was] well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.*

⁹ **Genesis 16:3** *Then Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.*

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My point being, there was no justification for Abram taking Lot with him, when the Lord told him to get away from his family. Now I went through all of that to prove that Abraham did not become known as the father of faith because of perfect adherence to the word of the Lord.

Now why would I want to show you that? Because I want you to see that there is hope for you. God never put Abraham on a pedestal to show off his perfection. Holy Spirit inspired Moses, the writer of Genesis, to lay it all out there to showcase the grace of God, and maybe we can understand better what “diligently seeking Him¹⁰” means.

Hebrews 11:6 in The **Mirror Study Bible** says, *“There is no substitute reward for faith. Faith's return exceeds any other sense of achievement. Faith knows that God is; those who desire to respond to his invitation to draw near, realize by faith that he is life's most perfect gift.”* Then the notes on the verse go on to say, “(If he is the desired one then no substitute will suffice. Jesus Christ defines God's faith; he is Immanuel. He is the substance and evidence of all that God believes. Jesus is what God believes. The word translated reward is the word *misthapodotes*. This word is only used in the book of Hebrews, (6 times) and is an interesting combination of two words, *misthoo*, a wage and *apodidomi* to give away; righteousness is revealed by faith as a gift and not as a reward for keeping the law; faith pleases God, not good or bad behavior.”

While this is actually very good, it may be a little overwhelming because it is very wordy. So I will also share the **Amplified translation** of **Hebrews 11:6** with you. It

¹⁰ **Hebrews 11:6** *But without faith [it is] impossible to please [Him,] for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and [that] He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

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reads, *“But without faith it is impossible to [walk with God and] please Him, for whoever comes [near] to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He rewards those who [earnestly and diligently] seek Him.”*

I hope you caught this from these two translations. God Himself is the reward. Compare that idea with **Colossians 3:4**, *“When Christ [who is] our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”* Christ is the giver of life, but He Himself is the life He gives. God is a rewarder, but He Himself is the reward He gives. When you come to Him, you must believe He is, but that doesn’t only mean you believe in His existence, but you must believe He is the rewarder and the reward. You must diligently seek HIM. You’re not seeking stuff, you are seeking Him. When you need healing, don’t seek healing, seek the healer. When you need provision, seek the provider. Compare that idea with **Romans 3:26**, *“to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”* The **Mirror Bible** pointed out that *“no substitute will suffice.”* Nothing you could ever receive from Him could ever be a suitable substitute for, or could equal the value of finding Him— Himself.

In **Genesis 26:4-5** God said this to Abraham’s promised son, Isaac, *“And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5 ‘because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.’”*

Let’s be clear here, when God says Abraham kept His laws, He was not talking about the Ten Commandments, as they were not given until approximately 500 years after his death. If it had been referring to the Mosaic law, this would not be a true statement. As we read his story we find that he was

willing to give his wife to Pharoah, in **Genesis 12**, and then again to Abimelech in **chapter 20**. In both cases he told a half truth, which actually means, a lie, because it was Intended to deceive, in order to save his own skin. In **Genesis 16** we see that Abraham had an adulterous relationship, he fathered a child with Hagar, who was his wife's maid. I know, it was with his wife's consent, but that's still adultery. **James 2:10** says, *"For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one [point,] he is guilty of all."*

So how is it that God could say *"he obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws?"* (**Genesis 26:5**) **Romans 5:13** explains, *"(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."* Understand this, Abraham had no "Ten Commandments." In fact, He had no scripture at all. Some Bible scholars believe the oldest book in the Bible is the book of Job. Some also believe Job was a contemporary of Abraham, but they were certainly not neighbors. Job was from the and of Uz, according to **Job 1:1**. But in all of Abraham's travels, the land of Uz is not named. The next scriptures we have are from the pen of Moses, roughly 500 years after Abraham. So what law then is God talking about? There had apparently been some oral communication from God, which Abraham obeyed.

Christians, especially those who have had some grace teaching, often bow up at the mention of the word "obey." They say, "but I'm made righteous by Jesus' obedience," quoting **Romans 5:19**, *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."* And they are scripturally accurate to say that. But let me tell you, Jesus' perfect obedience to Father does not negate the necessity of you obeying God.

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But Paul writes in **Romans 3:8**, *“And [why] not [say,] ‘Let us do evil that good may come’?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.”* This is an issue that Paul had to address. He calls this “slander,” which could actually be translated from the Greek word “blasphēmēō,” as “blasphemy.” He used the strongest possible word here to make his point that we do not, nor have we ever preached that. He says, that is blasphemy against us, and furthermore, against the work of Jesus. What Jesus did at the cross was not to relieve you from the need to obey God, but to make it possible.

The Ten Commandments, and the rest of the law, was an unattainable standard through the flesh. Grace was never intended to lower God’s standard, Grace elevated it. Jesus, in **Matthew 5:27-28** said, *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 ‘But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* Jesus said, “I’m going to take the already impossible commandments and elevate them from a physical action, to heart posture. Don’t blaspheme by saying ‘God is now cool with sin.’”

We by nature walked in disobedience because that is what was in us. Jesus didn’t make obedience to God unnecessary, He made it possible by His perfect obedience, by joining us to Himself in perfectly union. Faith in that enables you to obey. Ezekiel prophesied in **Ezekiel 11:19** *“Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh.”* **Romans 6:17** says, *“But God be thanked that [though] you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”* Notice, your obedience is from the heart, the

born again, recreated spirit that is in you. **2 Corinthians 4:11** says, *“For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”*

Let me be perfectly clear, I am not suggesting that you don’t need to obey God. I just want you to understand that God does not get all worked up over the things we think He does. What was it God considered about Abram? **Romans 4:3** says, *“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”* We focus on the mistakes, but God’s focus was on what Abraham believed. What did he believe? He believed God would make him a great nation; bless him and make his name great; he believed he would be a blessing, and that God would bless those who bless him, and would curse those who curse him; he believed in him all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (**Genesis 12:2-3**). Though His obedience was imperfect, the fact that he got up and left his home country, going to a place that was yet to be shown, was indication he believed.

Let’s go back now and see the first thing God said to Abram. **Genesis 12:1-3**. *“Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”*

You see, love is 180 degrees from fear. Why would anyone say “no” to God? Because they have not known or believed the love He has toward them. **1 John 4:16** says, *“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”* Their fear is that God does not know, or that He does

not care for their wellbeing. Many Christians, though they mentally agree that He loves them, they fear that saying “yes” to Him will somehow diminish their life. Notice what **Hebrews 11:8** says about Abraham’s faith response. *“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.”*

Abraham trusted God on a whole different level when God asked Him to sacrifice his son Isaac. What did it take for him to say “yes?” **Hebrews 11:17-19** *“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten [son,] 18 of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ 19 concluding that God [was] able to raise [him] up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”* God made this request of Abraham after a 25 year relationship, not when they first met. Why could Abraham trust God on this level... that God was able to “raise him (Isaac) up?” Because God had proven His ability to raise the dead, when He resurrected Abraham’s dead reproductive system and Sarah’s dead womb.¹¹

Jesus had to trust God’s resurrection power

Have you ever thought about the trust level Jesus had to have in order to give Himself to the cross. We see repeatedly in scripture that God (Father) raised Him from the dead. He did not raise Himself. In **Luke 23:46** we read Jesus’ final words before He died. It says, *“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His*

¹¹ **Romans 4:19** *And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.*

last.” When we fail to consider Jesus’ humanity, we cannot possibly recognize the significance of what happened here. We often just kind of blow right over what He did at the cross, thinking it was no big deal because He was the Son of God, or literally, God in the flesh, which He was.

Jesus, in his earthly walk, overwhelmingly refers to Himself as the “Son of Man” (80 times), but only a handful of times as the “Son of God.” Though He was and is God, He functioned on this earth as a man. Why? Because in the beginning, God gave authority over the earth, to man.¹²

Philippians 2:7-8 says, *“but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, [and] coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to [the point of] death, even the death of the cross.”* The word “appearance” is from the Greek word, “schēma,” meaning, “(as a mode or circumstance), external condition:—fashion.”

My point is, He not only looked like a man, His mode or circumstance was that of a man, He functioned as a man... He was a man... the Son of Man. **John 1:14** says, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”* Every facet of His life was carried out as a man... a man anointed of Holy Spirit. **Acts 10:38** says, *“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”* But He did not endure the cross by the power of Holy Spirit. He did that purely as a man. That’s why, **Matthew 27:46** says, *“And*

¹² **Genesis 1:28** *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

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about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" He had to face the cross as a man of faith. He is the author of our faith, and He fully finished it by seeing it all the way through to the throne at the right hand of the Father. **Hebrews 12:2** says, *"looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of [our] faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."* **Philippians 2:9-11** continues with, *"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Chapter Five: WDJJ

In 1989, a youth pastor from Holland, Michigan, named Janie Tinklenberg had an idea to help hold the 35 students in her youth group accountable for their decisions. She had friendship bracelets made for them with the four letter acronym, “WWJD” imprinted on them. If it had been in today’s social media environment, we would have said, “it went viral.” It began to show up everywhere, from bumper stickers to t-shirts, to key chains, coffee cups, Bible markers and much more in addition to the silicone wrist bands. It was a four letter acronym that someone would say as a reminder when their friend had been treated wrongly, when they were tempted to do or say something they shouldn’t, or maybe were just faced with a difficult decision. Everyone knew what it meant, and even though it was 35 plus years ago, those of us who were around, and some who were not, have heard it and still remember; WWJD. If you’re trying to figure it out, you’re either quite young, we’re not a Christian back then, or you just crawled out from under a rock.

What Would Jesus Do? A very valid question to ask yourself, especially if you have a desire in your heart to reflect His life and character... if you are His disciple, and want to imitate Him. Slow down, rather than making rash, pressure influenced decisions, think about what you’ve learned of and from our Lord, and the act accordingly. It will keep you from having to apologize so much, and from living with a lot of regrets.

One day while preaching on the finished work of Jesus at the cross, the Lord spoke a one letter, but huge variation of this acronym to me... **“WDJD?”** What is that? I’m glad you asked. **“What Did Jesus Do?”** You see, you and I live on the finished side of the cross. WWJD, “What Would Jesus Do?” might keep our decisions and behaviors in line. Many “faith

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people” live according to “What WILL Jesus Do?” They forget that He said *“It is finished!”* (**John 19:30** *“So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.”*)

Remember this;

If God wanted to do it, He did it! If He did it, He did it in Christ! If He didn’t do it in Christ, He’s not going to do it!

That is a simple, but profound truth that will keep faith from being misplaced. **WDJD** will keep you from trying to use faith to twist the arm of the Lord to do something He has either already done, or that is not in His will at all.

It has been well said, that faith begins where the will of God is known. Let’s take that thought and bring it in line with the theme of this chapter. Let’s connect it to the, “if God wanted to do it...” statement. **Malachi 3:6** reveals the character of God in this statement, *“For I [am] the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.”* This is one reason why God is trustworthy.

If God wanted to do something, what could ever prevent Him from doing it? After all He is the almighty, omnipotent one. He is the creator of all things. Paul said in his sermon at Athens, **Acts 17:28**, *“for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’”*

Look at **Romans 8:29**, *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”* Here Apostle Paul states God’s will, to “predestined.” “Pre,”

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means He did it beforehand... already did it. God's actions are predetermined in His nature and character.

In **Luke 12:22-34**, Jesus so masterfully teaches us this lesson. *"He said to His disciples, 'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 'Life is more than food, and the body [is more] than clothing. 24 'Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?'"* Let's hit the pause button for a moment and point out some truth Jesus has just highlighted to us.

Jesus tells us that Father takes care of ravens (or as the **Matthew 6** rendering of this lesson says in **verse 26**, *"birds of the air."* Notice, He points out that Father takes care of them, not because of what they do, they don't sow, they don't reap, they don't store up provisions in barns. Father just knows what they need, so He provides, because that is His nature... He is a provider. Then Jesus tells us we are more valuable than birds.

Let's continue with **verse 25** *'And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 "If you then are not able to do [the] least, why are you anxious for the rest?"* Pause again. You are not able to do the least. Jesus is teaching us what trusting God is all about. It is to recognize that you can't, so rest.

Matthew 6:27 continues, *"Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 'If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more [will He clothe] you, O [you] of little faith? 29 'And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an*

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anxious mind. 30 'For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 'But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 'Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 'Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'"

I said all of that to say this; Father's primary purpose is for you and I to be conformed to the image of His Son. So what did He do? He sent His Son to take our place, literally to become us, pay the penalty for our sins, as us. And in the mind of God, He did that before the fall of the world... before Adam even sinned. **Revelation 13:8** says, *"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* The word *"foundation"* is translated from the the Greek word, *"katabolḗ."* It is a compound word, the first part refers to something that descends down from, and the last part implies that it was forcibly cast down or thrown down. So a better translation is, *"from before the fall of the world,"* before it was thrown down by Adam's disobedience. Literally, before there was a need, God took care of the problem. So, *"if God wanted to do it, He did it."* He created the birds... so He takes care of them, though they do nothing to receive it. He created Lilies, so He clothes them... because He wanted to. He created you, and wants you to be in His image and likeness... so did everything necessary for that to happen, overthrowing every barrier except your choice.

But you can have no faith in any of that until you know that it is His will. **1 John 5:14-15** says, *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His*

will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” You can have faith that He made you righteous when you know that He demonstrated His will for you to be in His image, by sending Jesus. **Romans 8:32** says, *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* **Philippians 4:19** says, *“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* How did He supply your need? *“By Christ Jesus.”* Look at how the **Mirror Study Bible** says this, **Philippians 4.19.** *“My God shall also abundantly fill every nook and cranny to overflowing in all areas of your lives. The wealth of his dream come true in Christ Jesus measures his generosity towards you.”*

When you know His eternal purpose, it is easy to know His action. Look at these words from the prophet Isaiah, **Isaiah 46:11** *“Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken [it;] I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed [it;] I will also do it.”* Some Bible Commentators say this passage refers to the Persian king, Cyrus. I won’t dispute that. But Bible prophecy often has multiple layers. It can be fulfilled in one way, and then be fulfilled in another way. In **Luke chapter 24** we read how Jesus, following His resurrection, appeared to some disciples on the road to Emmaus. As He talked with them He began to teach them. **Luke 24:27** says, *“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”* In **John 1:43**, Jesus called Philip to follow Him. Then in **verse 45** we read, *“Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’”* Notice, Moses and ALL of the prophets wrote about Jesus. This includes Isaiah. So Isaiah

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could be prophesying about Cyrus, but at the same time, speaking of Jesus.

Notice what Jesus says in **John 6:38**, *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* What did God say in **Isaiah 46:11**? *“Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country.”* Jesus came from heaven, *“a far country...”* to do the Father’s will... or to *“execute His counsel.”* And that counsel was, (**Romans 8:29**), *“...He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”* God wanted to do it, so He did it in Christ.

One day I was watching a talk show on Christian Television. The discussion for the program was about standing on the promises of God. They were talking about scriptures that promise healing for our bodies, and how to stand on those promises when we come under attacks of the devil against our health. I was watching, and thinking to myself, this is good stuff. Then I heard Holy Spirit say, *“Healing is not a promise.”* Taken back for a moment, though I did not speak it, I thought, *“yes it is... get thee behind me satan.”* Scriptures began to run through my mind, to build my argument. Many were the same scriptures they had just been talking about on the program. Then I heard Holy Spirit say, *“yes, it was a promise, but the promise has been fulfilled. So it is no longer a promise, but a report.”*

Then this passage from the prophet Isaiah rose up in my spirit. **Isaiah 53:1** *“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”* The prophet did not ask, *“who has believed the promise?”* The question was, *“Who has believed our report?”* What report should we believe? The report that, *“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with*

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grief. And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” We should believe the report that, (verse 4) “He has borne our griefs (sickness and disease) And carried our sorrows (pain); Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He [was] wounded for our transgressions, [He was] bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed...” (Isaiah 53:3-5)

You see, the report Isaiah delivered, though written beforehand, was prophetically spoken as past tense... “He HAS borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” He WAS wounded for our transgressions. Bruised for our iniquities...” Isaiah saw it all and reported it all as past tense... already done. Though it was promised, Isaiah saw it prophetically from the finished side. Then Isaiah says, to those who see this as a report of a finished work, and believe it, to them the arm of the Lord, which speaks of His strength, will be extended.

Chapter Six: Faith Speaks

One of the first things I learned when I encountered the Word of Faith, was the power of the tongue. I heard the teaching of perhaps the greatest faith teacher of our time, Kenneth E. Hagin. I won't go into detail about his testimony of healing, which he shared in many of his books and teachings, of how as a 16 year old boy, he received his healing after having been bedfast for 16 months with several incurable diseases, and Holy Spirit revealed to him the principles of faith from **Mark 11:23-24**. After receiving Healing, the Lord instructed him, "go teach My people faith," which he did.

Before I encountered his ministry in the late '70s - early '80s, I had never heard anyone teach about the power of the tongue and confession of God's Word. But these principles literally changed my life. I grew up in Carlsbad, New Mexico, where at that time, there was no such thing as Christian Radio, or Television. Only on Sunday mornings, a local radio station carried the Revival Time Radio Broadcast, from Springfield, Missouri, with Reverend C. M. Ward. My Dad always tuned in. At 19 years old I moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma. At that time, Tulsa had two Christian Radio stations that had a variety of programming which included preaching and teaching from nationally known and local ministries.

I began to hear people like, Kenneth Hagin, Charles Capps, Kenneth Copeland, and many others. This was just one of the tools God used to grab my attention as a 19-20 year old. I was born again as a young child, and always had a heart toward God, but had never before encountered this kind of ministry. When I began to hear scriptures that I didn't even know were in the Bible, taught in an expository but applicable way, it intrigued me and changed the trajectory of

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my life. This is when I fell in love with the ministry of the teacher, the simple explanation of the scriptures. I was captivated by their cohesiveness, how from Genesis to Revelation, they reveal one timeless story of God's fathomless love for mankind, manifested in the person of Jesus Christ. Now 47 years later I still love to hear men of God who can open up and uncover the profound depths of the Word. At 67 years of age, it's still what I aspire to every day. It is deeply troubling to me when I observe the abandonment of teaching, in favor of inspiration, the "give me a sixty second sound bite that I can quote," approach to the very life of God, revealed to us on the pages of His living Word. If you have made it this far in this book, it is probable that you want more.

So with that said, let me open up God's timeless Word and teach you this powerful authority that God has deposited in you. As with any Bible truth, there is an enemy that does not want you to get this. So double down and refuse him that victory in your life. You might be labeled as a, "name it claim it," or "blab it grab it." All of us who taught this were by some. We have been lumped together with many who have half way understood this, and have mixed a little faith with a little unbelief. They call it "balance," but in reality it equals unbelief. And some have added things that no honest faith teacher ever taught, but they claim we did. It's all because they have an incomplete revelation.

Since this chapter specifically deals with the principles of confession, or we could say, the power of the tongue. Let's start with this. When I speak of confession, I'm not talking about confessing your sins. I am talking about making a statement of what you believe, based on what the Word of God says. It is verbally committing to a belief or position, based on what God said on the subject. Confession doesn't produce faith, but faith produces the confession. Notice what

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Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 4:13** *“And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘I believed and therefore I spoke,’ we also believe and therefore speak.”* Notice I first believed, then, because I believe, I spoke accordingly... I spoke words consistent with what I believe.

Paul also told the Romans, and us, what faith does and does not say. In other words, faith has a language. **Romans 10:8-12** says, *“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...”* It is possible to say what you don’t believe, but if you truly believe something, your tongue will eventually commit to it.

My wife got me started watching, “Contraband: Seized at the Border,” and “Contraband: Seized at the Airport,” on the Discovery Channel, and “To Catch a Smuggler,” on the National Geographic Channel. On these television shows, TSA agents, and Border Patrol agents will have suspicions about what a person may be trying to bring into a country, maybe the United States, but they also show other countries. When the agents suspect someone of trying to smuggle illegal items, or misrepresenting their reason for coming into the country, they begin by questioning them. Usually, if they are doing or carrying something illegal, they will lie. The agents will continue to ask questions, because they know there is a high likelihood they will unintentionally reveal the truth.

I have learned over many years of dealing with people, if they talk enough, they will eventually tell you what their real problem is, or what they truly believe. Our mouth will reveal

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our heart, because we speak from the heart. The heart is the resting place of faith, be it faith in God and His Word, or of faith in something else. Jesus said, in **Matthew 12:34**, *“Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”* And in **Luke 6:45**, *“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*

Authority From Creation

In **Genesis 1:26-28** God said, *“‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ 27 So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”* How did God intend for Adam to exercise the dominion he had just been given? Adam actually never walked it out. For the next 4,000 years we never saw it. Then Jesus, the man sent down from heaven, came on the scene and showed us how the is was to work.

Notice, man was created in the image and likeness of God. Many Christians have read these verses many times without taking time to understand what that actually means. Perhaps there is room to misunderstand... that is, until Jesus showed up. He removed the benefit of the doubt, by clearly demonstrating what the “image of God” means. **Hebrews 1:3** says straight up, *“who being the brightness of [His] glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all*

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things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high..." The first Adam was created in God's image, and the last Adam was the express image of God.

Until Jesus came, all of our examples of what the image and likeness of God means, were tainted by Adam's fall. But **John 1:14** tells us, *"...the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* Jesus, who in the eternal realm, prior to incarnation, was known as "God the Word." But according to **1 Corinthians 15:45**, He came into this world as the Last Adam. *("And so it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being.' The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit.")*. In other words, He became what the first Adam was created to be, but never walked out. So when we see Jesus in His humanity, we see what we were created to be... we see what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God. So if you want to know what "image and likeness" means, look at how Jesus walked.

So when we see Jesus speak to a fig tree, observe and learn. Jesus doesn't want to be admired, He wants to be imitated. Look at this, **John 14:7-9**, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."* ⁸ Philip said to Him, *'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.'* ⁹ Jesus said to him, *'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"* Jesus showed us how Father rules His domain, by speaking words.

In **Mark 11:21** we see Jesus, having just the day before, cursed an unfruitful fig tree, along with His disciples were passing by the tree again. We read, "And Peter,

remembering, said to Him, ‘Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.’”

Mark 11:22-23 says, “*So Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith in God. 23 ‘For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.’*”

I address the statement, “*Have faith in God,*” in another chapter in this book, so I will not deal with it here, except to say, the literal translation should be, “*have God’s faith.*” The **Bible in Basic English** says, “*Have God’s faith,*” and **Young’s Literal Translation** says, “*Have faith of God.*”

You see, every time a religious mind encounters a verse of scripture that says who God really created you to be, it responds with the words of the serpent in the garden, (Genesis 3:1) “Has God indeed said?”

In **John 10**, the Jews were once planning to stone Jesus... again. Jesus said, “all I’ve done is good works, which ones do you plan to stone me for?” They said, “it’s not for good works, it’s because you make yourself God.” I love *what Jesus said in 34, “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, “You are gods” ’?”* Jesus here is quoting from the **82nd Psalm**, which is God talking to men. Notice what the Psalmist says, “*God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods.*” There is only two possible explanations of this. Either there are multiple gods, because he speaks of a “*congregation of the mighty,*” and uses the phrase, “*among the gods.*” Then in **Psalms 82:6**, God said, “*I said, ‘You [are] gods, And all of you [are] children of the Most High.’*” The other possibility is, He is talking about men. Then when Jesus quotes **verse 6**, He narrows that to the later, He is calling men, “*gods.*” Here is what **Psalms 82:6-8**, “*I said, ‘You [are] gods, And all of you [are] children of the Most*

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High. 7 But you shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes.' 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth; For You shall inherit all nations."

Notice how Jesus used this passage of scripture. It should remove all doubt about what **Psalm 82** is talking about. Jesus said, **John 10:35**, *"If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came..."* Who did the Word of God come to? Men. Jesus said that, *"(and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 'do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? 37 'If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 'but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father [is] in Me, and I in Him."* There should be no mistake, Jesus said that **Psalm 82** is calling men, *"gods."*

Don't throw the book away yet! A "god" is one who has the rule over a domain. Jehovah God, Yahweh God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the creator of all things. You are His creation. He is eternally and self existent, both past, present, and future. You are an eternal being from the point of your creation forward. You have a marked beginning. He is dependent on no one outside of Himself, but you are totally dependent on Him. He is life, but you are only the recipient of His life.

What makes you, or any other human being, with the exception of Jesus, a god? Paul said, in **Acts 17:29** *"Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising."* We are the offspring of the only true God. Jesus said, in **John 17:3** *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* What

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does it mean that He is the only “*true*” God. Let’s say it like this; nobody made Him God, He did not become God, but He made men to be gods when He said, “let them have dominion...” **Genesis 1:26**. Nobody “*let*” or permitted Him to have dominion, but He “*let*” you have dominion... (**Psalms 82:6**) I said, “*You [are] gods...*” He said it, and you are not a threat to His position. If you are struggling with what I said here, pause, read and reread this section as many times as you need to, asking Holy Spirit to give you clarity.

This brings us to our topic, how God does things. This is how we should do things. If you want to know how to rule your domain, the earth, imitate how God rules His domain, which is ALL THINGS.

Jesus showed us how it works. He did not come to show us what God can do. He came to show us what a man, anointed by, and in partnership with Holy Spirit, can do. He did not have to come to show what God can do. We saw in the Old Testament that God rolled back the waters of the Red Sea, caused the sun to stand still, made water come out of a rock, cleansed the leper, etc. Jesus became flesh and spoke to a fig tree and it obeyed. He then told us, what He did with the fig tree, we could do, not only with trees, but with mountains as well. In **Matthew 8:8** He healed by speaking a word, “*The centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.’*” And in **verse 16**, He cast out spirits with a word. “*When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.*” In **Mark 4:39** He calmed the storm with a word; “*Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace, be still!’ And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.*” We could go on.

In **Mark chapter 11** we find a passage of scripture that became Brother Hagin's signature teaching, that probably everyone who was influenced by His ministry has themselves taught from, I know I have many, many times. Beginning with **Mark 11:12-14**, *"Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He (Jesus) was hungry. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 In response Jesus said to it, 'Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.' And His disciples heard [it]."*

Notice, a couple of important things to see here, which we will elaborate on. First, Jesus spoke directly to the tree. Second, Jesus then simply went on His way. He didn't belabor the point. He didn't keep repeating Himself. He didn't have the disciples gather around, hold hands and sing worship songs. He spoke, then walked away, confident in what He had said. How do I know? Because of what happened next.

Mark 11:20-23 continues this story, *"Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots."* It was the next day before there was any visible evidence of what Jesus had said. The next morning, Jesus didn't go check the tree. In fact, it wasn't even Jesus who noticed it was withered away, it was Peter who pointed it out to Him. Jesus already knew it. He knew it, not by a word of knowledge, but because He knew the power of words. He tells us that in His response to Peter. In **verse 21** it says, *"And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.'* Jesus didn't indicate shock. He didn't say, "o wow!" His cool demeanor was as if to say, "of course." Notice what He said in **verse 22**. *"Have faith in God. 23 'For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into*

the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.” The literal translation of His statement is, *“have God’s faith.”* I address this in Chapter Seven of this book, entitled, “Who’s Faith is it.”

Notice what Jesus said next. **Mark 11:23** *“For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”* Many years ago the Lord said to me, The Lord said to me, “I told my people to speak to the mountain, but most of them are speaking to Me about the mountain.” It’s important to know that when Jesus tells you to do something, He doesn’t mean to ask Him to do it. When God says something, He is than bound by His word. He does not say anything He is not committed to, and He is committed to everything He said. When He gave man dominion in Genesis chapter three, He has never, and will never violate that authority. If He were ever to override man’s power to choose, the time to have done it would have been when Adam was about to eat the forbidden fruit. That choice had the furthest reaching consequences of any decision ever made, because it effected every person ever born of this planet. It even effected God, because He had to sacrifice His Son, and Jesus had to suffer for us. **Psalms 15:4** speaks of a man who *“[who] swears to his own hurt and does not change.”* God did that. God is bound to man’s dominion in the earth.

Several years ago my wife told me that she had a growth of some kind on her shoulder. Her bra strap rubbing on it was painful. She said, “I need you to agree with me that it is gone.” We came into agreement on that. A couple of weeks later she asked if I had been praying about it. I said, “no.” She got upset with me and said, “I asked you to.” I said, no

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you didn't, you asked me to agree with you. I did, and I'm still in agreement." She understood what I was telling her. About two weeks after that, she called me one day to tell me it was gone. She said, "I don't know when it went away, but it's gone." We didn't have the level of revelation at that time, that we have today, about the finished work of Jesus, but Grace carried us.

In **Luke 17:5** we read, *"And the apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.' So the Lord said, 'If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.'"*

Have you ever considered that Man is the only one of God's creation charged with the responsibility of "having dominion," but he is also the only one of God's creation placed on the earth, with the capacity for intelligent language? Some birds and animals have been able to mimic sounds and human words, but they do not have the ability of intelligent language. Man is the only one.

We rule with our words

As we spoke of earlier where Jesus cursed the fig tree, we rule over nature by our words. In **Mark chapter 4**, Jesus was in a boat with His disciples when a great storm arose. He was sound asleep, but the disciples were fearful for their lives, so they woke him up. **Mark 4:39** says, *"Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm." Jesus spoke to trees, and now to wind and the sea.*

Years ago I was leading a team of teenagers doing missions work in Mexico. One day the plan was to go to a park, but it was pouring down rain. The team was asking me, "what are

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we going to do?” I answered, “we are going to go do ministry like we planned.” When it was time to go, the rain stopped, we loaded on the van and drove to the park. Just as we arrived and started unloading, the rain started again. We took cover in the van, and the team began to ask again, “what are we going to do?” I repeated, “we are going to do ministry like we planned. I don’t recall exactly what I said that day, but I do remember that I commanded the rain to stop. The rain stopped, and there appeared a hole in the cloud cover, directly over the park, the sun shown through, and we did ministry that day. Immediately when we finished, the hole in the clouds closed up and we got soaked as we loaded back on the van.

I lived for several years in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which is notorious for tornados in the spring. I remember on several occasions when local weather reports would say that a tornado was moving directly toward us, I would stand on my porch, point at the sky and command, no tornado will touch down here. You can say what you will, and I could not argue, but in 14 years of living there, I never saw a tornado.

All four gospels record the story (**Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14**) of Jesus feeding a multitude of 5,000 men, plus women and children, with five loaves of bread and two fish, with leftovers. Additionally, Matthew and Mark (**Matthew 15:32-38; Mark 8:1-10**) tell of another instance where He fed a crowd of 4,000, besides women and children, with seven loaves and a few fish. In each of these, Jesus took the loaves and fish, blessed, or gave thanks for them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people.

In each story that I am sharing with you, I am not telling you a formula, $a + b = c$, (say this and get this result.) A number of years ago I set out to study everything the Bible says

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about healing. I looked t every instance where Jesus healed someone. I did not find a formula, as every case had its own peculiarities. In most cases, Jesus simply spoke a word. When Jesus cast out the unclean spirits, He simply spoke to them to come out. There was no theatrics

It is by our words that we rule over the spirit world, and over nature. **Luke 4:36** says, *“Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, ‘What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.’”* And **Matthew 8:16** says, *“When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.”* Some say, “but that was Jesus.” The reality is, when we get all caught up in the theater of it all, the reality is, we are attempting to either pursued God to do something, or in most cases, to do something by our own self effort.

Hold Fast

Hebrews 4:14 says, *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] confession.”* **Hebrews 10:23** says, *“Let us hold fast the confession of [our] hope without wavering, for He who promised [is] faithful.”* And **James 1:5-8** says, *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 [he is] a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”* To hold fast your confession does not mean to keep repeating the confession of your faith, it means not to contradict it. God gave us 66 books of the Bible and never contradicted Himself. Jesus didn’t keep

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repeating His confession about the fig tree. He made His statement, then left it at that. Jesus spoke very matter of factly,

Consistency is an important key. You cannot believe two conflicting things. **James 3:10** says, *“Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.”*

As a young married couple, my wife and I were ready to have a baby. We were new to the principles of faith and were determined to practice it in our lives. We agreed together and asked God for a baby, specifically a baby boy. When we announced to family and friends that we were expecting, the inevitable question was asked, “what are you hopping for, a girl or boy?” We knew a little about holding fast our confession, so every time we were asked we answered, “it’s going to be a boy.” We were asked this by multiple people during the pregnancy. We held fast, declaring it was a boy. We had not decided on a name until the very end, in fact, on the way to the hospital, but throughout the pregnancy we called him, Junior, which often evoked the response, “what if it’s a girl.” Our response was always, “its a boy.” People just kind of chuckled. Bear in mind, ultrasound gender reveals were possible, but not commonly used as it is today, so our confidence was based on what we had asked God for.

On May 9, 1981, we welcomed our baby boy, Jason. When he was 3 years old, we decided it was time for a second child. The three of us asked God for a baby girl. We did the same thing, except this time we actually chose her name.

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People said, “you need to pick a boy name too, just in case.” On May 7, 1985 we welcome Courtney into the world.

Over the following years we would share this testimony. On several occasions we had expectant couples come to us, asking us to agree with them that their baby would be a boy, or that it would be a girl. Our response to them was, “it’s too late for that, at this point it is what it is. The gender was assigned at conception. You should have asked for what you want before.

I shared this for two reasons, to say, God loves you and loves to give good gifts, so ask Him and expect to receive. Then hold fast your confession.

You may be asking, “doesn’t this contradict your statement about God made earlier, about “what He wanted to do, He did?” The personal details of your life have not been predetermined by God. He left room for you to have personal desires. Not everyone desires a baby boy or girl. God’s blessings in your life can be personalized. You have a personal personality and personal preferences. He tells us, in **Philippians 4:6**, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”*

Things that be not...

Romans 4:17 says, “...God, ...gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.” I want to borrow a simple illustration to make this point, from the late Charles Capps. Some feel if they say something that they cannot contact with their physical senses, that they would be lying. Charles Capps explained it like this. If you go out in your back yard to feed your dog, but you don’t see the dog, you don’t say, “dog gone.” You say, “here dog

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(calling the dog by name).” But the dog is not here. Did you just lie? No, you are calling what is not as though it were. But you call it as you desire it to be, not as you see it with physical eyes to be. You believe the dog will come. You are calling what is not the case as though it were.

The confession, or words spoken, have the power to make a spiritually dead man live. It’s how you got saved. **Romans 10:9** says, *“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

Words had the power to make a virgin conceive. In **Luke 1:38**, Mary spoke the most powerful words ever uttered by a human voice. The passage tells us that the angel Gabriel came to her and told her she would conceive and give birth to Jesus. Mary didn’t understand how this was possible, because she was a virgin. Gabriel explained that this would be the work of the Holy Spirit. *“Then Mary said, ‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.”* We would do well to find out from God’s word, what He has said, the repeat Mary’s confession, *“Let it be to me according to your word.”*

Power to control your whole body

Look now at what the Apostle James said about the power of the tongue. **James 3:2** *“For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.”* The word “stumble” is translated from the Greek word “ptaíō;” which means, to trip, sin, fail, fall, offend, or stumble. James says, if you do not trip, sin, etc. in your words, you are a perfect man. This is talking about consistency in what you say. The word

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“perfect,” is from the Greek word, “teleios, meaning, of full age, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness. Then James uses the word, “chalinagogeō which mean to lead by a bridle, to guide, to hold in check, or restrain. He is telling you, if you can control your words, with your words you can control your whole body.

You could not get saved without faith filled words. It is by faith powered words that the obstacles in our way can be moved. **Mark 11:23** says, *"For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says."*

Angels are at our command as we speak God's Word. **Psalms 103:20** says, *"Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word."* Notice, it does not say they heed the voice of God. It says, they heed the voice of His word. That is, whoever gives voice to His word. God has spoken, but we provide the voice in your world for what He has spoken. Isaiah prophesied the healing accomplished by Jesus when stripes were laid upon Him at the cross. Today, we give voice to that when we say, "by His stripes I am healed." Or when we say what the Psalmist wrote (**Psalms 118:17**) *"I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the LORD."*

Chapter Seven: Whose Faith Is It?

Habakkuk 2:4 *“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”*

In **Romans 1:17**, Apostle Paul quotes from the Prophet Habakkuk, with one seemingly small, but actually huge variation. *“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”* It seems Paul omits one word, “his.” But when looking at the Hebrew text he quotes from (**Habakkuk 2:4**), we see the phrase *“by his faith,”* is actually a single word, “*‘ěmûwnâh*” which does not assign the possession of the faith. In other words, it simply says *“the just shall live by faith,”* as does Paul in **Romans 1:17**, **Galatians 3:11**, and **Hebrews 10:38**.

Romans 1:17 (Mirror Study Bible) *“Herein lies the secret of the power of the Gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed. The dynamic of the gospel is the revelation of God’s faith as the only valid basis for our belief. The Prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness reveals the life of our design. Righteousness by his (God’s) faith defines life.”*

2 Peter 1:4 says, *“by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption [that is] in the world through lust.”* As a partaker of the divine nature, everything that is His by nature, meaning Jesus’ nature, is yours. That includes His faith, is now yours. If you’re thinking that is a stretch, look at this. **Galatians 2:20** says, *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”* His life, and His faith... I live by His faith... you live by His faith.

Mark 11:22 (New King James Version) says, *“So Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith in God.’”* But let’s look at some other translations of this verse.

The Message says, *“Jesus was matter-of-fact: ‘Embrace this God-life. Really embrace it, and nothing will be too much for you.’”*

Young’s Literal Translation 98, *“And Jesus answering saith to them, ‘Have faith of God.’”*

Bible in Basic English, *“And Jesus, answering, said to them, ‘Have God’s faith.’”*

Worrell New Testament, *“And Jesus, answering, saith to them, ‘Have the faith of God.’”*

Douay Rheims, *“And Jesus answering, saith to them: ‘Have the faith of God.’”*

Godbey, *“And Jesus responding says to them, ‘Have God’s faith.’”*

Consider this; you have been so thoroughly joined to the Lord that you have His mind. **1 Corinthians 2:16**, *“For ‘who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.”* **1 Corinthians 6:17** says, *“But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit [with Him].”* **2 Corinthians 4:11** says, *“For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”* And **Colossians 3:3-4** says, *“For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ [who is] our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”* In other words, you died with Him, you have His life manifesting in you, you have His mind, you are one spirit with Him, so why not His faith?

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We could continue with, **Philippians 3:9**, *“and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which [is] from the law, but that which [is] through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;”* and **2**

Corinthians 5:21, *“For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”* Or how about this one? **Ephesians 2:14**, *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation”* or **1 John 4:17**, *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.”* And **Acts 17:28**, *“for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’”*

Let’s look at **Galatians 2:20** in the **Mirror Study Bible**. *“So here I am dead and alive at the same time. I’m dead to the old me I was trying to be and alive to the real me which is Christ in me. Co-crucified, now co-alive. What a glorious entanglement. I was in him in his death; now I discover that he is infused in me, in my life. For the first time, I’m free to be me in my skin, immersed in his faith in our joint-sonship. He loves me and believes in me. He is God’s gift to me.”*

There are a couple of words used here that are key to opening up a whole new understanding for us. The word, “infused,” which Webster’s dictionary defines as, “to cause to be permeated with something (such as a principle or quality) that alters usually for the better.” This is descriptive of the process of dying a piece of fabric. Once the dye has “infused” the fibers of the fabric, for instance, a white fabric dyed red, it can never be white again. In **Exodus 36** we see instructions for constructing the tabernacle in the wilderness. The tabernacle was a tent that was to be the house of God, where He would dwell among His people. **2 Corinthians 5:1** refers in this way to the “tent,” as your body. *“For we*

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know that if our earthly house, [this] tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” **1 Corinthians 6:19** says your body is the “temple,” or again, the dwelling place of God. “*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit [who is] in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*”

In **Exodus 36:19** “*Then he made a covering for the tent of ram skins dyed red, and a covering of badger skins above [that.]*”. Notice, the dyed ram skins were the covering for the tent... the body... a type of the church. **Ephesians 1:22-23** “*And He put all [things] under His feet, and gave Him [to be] head over all [things] to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*” In **Genesis 3:21** we see this. “*Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*” Are you getting the visual here? God made coverings for their bodies (their tents, or temples) of skins. An animal had to shed blood in order for that to happen. Then we see the covering for the tabernacle (tent, temple dwelling place) in the wilderness, made of skins dyed red (blood).

A picture is emerging here, of you and I, the dwelling place of God (corporately we are the church), with a covering from the broken body (skin) and shed blood (red dyed), of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have been infused with the blood of Jesus. Look at this verse, **Leviticus 17:11** “*For the life of the flesh [is] in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it [is] the blood [that] makes atonement for the soul.*” You have been so “infused” with the life of Christ, you actually have His faith.

The other word I want you to look at is, “immersed.” Webster says this word means, “to plunge into something that surrounds or covers: especially : to plunge or dip into a

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fluid. This is the word that is portrayed in baptism. This is one of a couple of reasons why we baptize by immersion, rather than sprinkling. It paints a much more accurate picture for us of what took place when you received your salvation.

This word describes the process of pickling. A cucumber (or any vegetable) is immersed into a acidic or vinegar solution that permeates the vegetable to preserve it. The process cannot be reversed. The pickle can never revert to being a fresh cucumber. You can't "unpickle" it.

I want you to understand how completely and thoroughly you are joined to the Lord. Until you grasp this, you cannot comprehend this truth that you can actually tap into and function by Jesus' faith. His life, His nature, His righteousness and yes, His faith.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."* Notice, the faith is a gift to you from God. You can't gift something to someone if it is not yours. If the faith was yours, it wasn't a gift. But **verse 8** calls it a gift. If I want to give you a birthday gift, I can't go shopping in your closet. If I give you what was already yours, it's not a gift.

Now this one, **Romans 12:3** *"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think [of himself] more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."* If God dealt it, it must have been His faith to deal. If it's your faith, how is it that He deals it out? If it's yours, wouldn't you be the one who deals it?

So you may ask, what is the big issue about who's faith it is? You see, with a flesh ruled mind I cannot live out the life of

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Jesus. This is why I cannot attain righteousness according to the law. Because the legal approach to God is an exercise of the flesh. Jesus said in **Matthew 26:41**, and in **Mark 14:38**, “... *The spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak.*” Paul wrote in **Galatians 5:16**, “*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*”

Romans 8:6-8 tells us, “*to be carnally minded [is] death, but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*” Any faith that I have, my own faith that is, is a mental ascent. My mind is not that strong. It can indeed get stronger, the more I exercise it toward godliness, but it is not strong enough to believe a tree’s, or a mountain’s relocation, when I can clearly see that it is right where it was. My mind is not strong enough to believe a dead man resurrected when I see his body lying in a casket. If you are educated in certain faith teachings, you may say, “you have to see it with spiritual eyes.” Thank you for making my point for me. You cannot grow your own faith to that point. To operate in that kind of faith, I must get out of my faith and into His.

Yes, you can stimulate the growth of your own natural faith, but not to the point of believing what your senses give contrary evidence of. **Ephesians 2:9** says it is the gift of God the enables you to believe to salvation. **Romans 10:9-10** says, “*that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” The faith to believe that Jesus rose from the dead is from the heart, not the head, or mind.

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Yes, you can stimulate the growth of your own faith by exercising it. **Hebrews 5:14** says, *“But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, [that is,] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”* The use of the word “senses” indicates He is talking about the flesh, because this is how you contact this physical world, by means of five physical senses, sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. Every time I am in a situation and I consciously choose to trust what God said, then see the fruit, my confidence, my faith grows from what my senses have confirmed.

2 Corinthians 10:3 says, *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.”* The **Mirror Study Bible** says, *“The fact that we are living in a physical world in human bodies of flesh does not mean that we engage ourselves in a combat dictated to by the typical tit-for-tat strategies of religion and the politics of the day.”* As this passage states, even though we are in physical, flesh and blood bodies, we are not limited to what the flesh controlled mind can grasp. We are supernatural people because of our union with the Lord, that we can live by His faith.

Romans 8:13 says, *“For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”* To live according to the spirit is to live by the faith OF the Son of God... to live by HIS faith. When you live according to the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body. His life in you, His faith in you. This is your superpower.

Let me explain what all of this means. It means when you curse a fig tree, and your eye sense tells you nothing happened, by the spirit you put to death the contradictory information provided by your sight sense, and by the faith of the Son of God, you can, *“not doubt in your heart, but*

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believe that those things you say will be done, and you will have whatever you say." Too many are feeling justified in living by "their" faith, their sensory faith, but the just shall live by HIS, GOD's faith. If you will consistently put to death the deeds of the body, the sensory faith, your senses will begin to come on board with the spirit.

Read this story again with the previously discussed understanding. **Mark 11:12-24**, *"Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 In response Jesus said to it, 'Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.' And His disciples heard [it.]" -- verse 20, "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.' 22 So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. 23 'For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 'Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive [them,] and you will have [them.]"*

How do you live by His faith? An excellent question. The next chapter of this book is called, "Misplaced Faith." I believe it will help you see what I'm talking about.

Chapter Eight: Misplaced Faith

I'm not talking about people who have lost their faith, you know, they can't find it, like you misplaced your car keys. I'm talking about, they put their faith in the "wrong place," or the wrong thing, they "mis" placed it. Let's try this, to help explain what I'm talking about... "wrongly assigned faith."

We can talk about living by His Faith, yet what we find ourselves doing is trying to believe what He believes. That is still living by your own faith. We work so hard, attempting to raise our faith level to match His. When from our innermost being, we know that will never happen. But isn't this the same mentality that religion fosters, to think I can raise my performance to attain salvation? Some are honest enough to acknowledge that they cannot do it, but others are religiously deceived to think they can or have.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 will help us comprehend this. *"For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."*

Let's take the first part of this first. There is a conflict between the flesh, or the carnal part of our being, and the spirit. But know this, you will never overcome carnal with more carnal. If we back up to **2 Corinthians 10:3** we see, *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh."* Look at these verses. **Galatians 5:17** says, *"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."* **Ephesians 6:12** seems however to be a contradiction, but I assure you it is not. In this verse Paul is telling us that your opponent is not other

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human beings... *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places.]”* **Colossians 2:23** then gets right down to the real issue at hand here. It says, *“These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, [false] humility, and neglect of the body, [but are] of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.”* You cannot win in spiritual warfare by a flesh response of self denigration or physical neglect.

In this book I am teaching you faith, but not in the traditional way it has been taught. Most faith teaching that I have been exposed to has been the self effort of a carnal mind. This is where people get off into thinking, if I discipline my confession so that I never say anything negative, that means I have faith. While we should maintain our confession of faith, that often becomes nothing more than a formula... i.e. the more times I say it, the more faith... This is where some stop taking their medication, thinking that to take it means they don't have faith. I've had that question so many time in my years of ministry. **Romans 10:17** says, *“So then faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* Not by neglecting the help that God has made available to us. That is nothing more than trying to defeat a spiritual enemy with a carnal weapon.

The arguments and high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God are in the form of contradictory thoughts that say, “what Jesus did was not enough, you must add to it, you must have an additional physical action. The devil argues that God sees you, or knows you by your failures... He sees what you've been doing.

Look at this. **(Mirror Study Bible) 2 Corinthians 10:5**
“Every lofty idea and argument positioned against God's

knowledge of us, is cast down and exposed to be a mere invention of our own imagination. We arrest every thought at spear point - anything that could possibly trigger an opposing threat to our redeemed identity and innocence is taken captive. The caliber of our weapon is empowered by the revelation of the ultimate consequence of the obedience of Christ. ¹³The obedience of Christ dwarfs the effect of the disobedience of Adam into insignificance! See **Romans 5:12-21.**"

What does God know of you? How does He see you? He sees you "in Christ." He sees the obedience of Christ as your obedience... his obedience counted to you... as if you had perfectly met all of the righteous requirements of the Law. What God knows about you is, (**Romans 8:3-4**) "*what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God [did] by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh (not your flesh, but Jesus' flesh), 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*" He knows that what your self effort could not do, He did for you through the substitutionary work of Jesus at the cross, and that His justice is now satisfied.

The last part of **2 Corinthians 10:5** says, "*bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*" Perhaps you have thought, as I once did, that this was saying I should make my thoughts agree with how Jesus thinks. If this is your approach, you will never succeed. But let me introduce you to what I believe is what this statement truly tells us. Notice, it is the obedience "OF" Christ, not obedience "TO" Christ. In other words, Paul is telling us to bring our thoughts captive to the fact that Christ obeyed.

¹³ note from Mirror Study Bible

Romans 5:19, *“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”* It was one man’s (Jesus’) obedience that made you righteous, not yours. And if that one man’s righteousness can be counted to you, if you can stand before the Father on the basis of His perfect right standing, His faith can be counted to you. You can stand before and speak to the fig tree with His faith counted to you. You can stand before the sick and command healing, based on His faith. You can stand in the face of an unclean spirit and command it to come out, based on His faith... not because you obeyed, not because you developed your faith to the point that you could believe and not doubt, but because He obeyed... and you are in Him, and He in you. Can you believe you are in Him and He in you? That is the proper placement of your faith. No wonder we don’t see the body of Christ by in large, doing the works of Jesus. We see it sporadically, but not consistently, and only by a few believers.

Stop trying to believe what He believes about your situation, and start believing you are joined to Him. I assure you, it is much easier to believe that, than to believe that mountain will move. He put the mountain there to start with, so for Him to believe and not doubt when He commands it to move, is no big deal for His faith... and you just need to believe you are in Him.

IS IT REALLY A LACK OF FAITH, OR JUST MISPLACED FAITH?

Too many times Christians erroneously respond in such a condescending way to people who have trouble in their lives, with, “you just don’t have enough faith.” However, oftentimes that is not the issue at all. Often it is an issue of misplaced faith. Let me explain.

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Did God send His Son in response to faith, or because you had faith? **Revelation 13:8** says, *“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* We know that God is omniscient, so He knew before creation, that Adam would fall. But He had a plan in place to redeem the human race back to Himself. In the mind of God, Jesus was crucified before the fall, actually before God even breathed into Adam’s lungs his first breath. So the answer to the question is, no. You see, God does not respond to faith. Faith is your response to God. Faith does not move God. He already moved, and now faith is your move. And because He knew you needed help, He actually gave you the faith, as we discussed in the previous chapter.

Notice here that the crucifixion was God’s plan from the beginning. **Acts 2:22** says, *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — 23 “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.”* Notice, it says, it was *“the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God.”*

When Adam fell, God the Father didn’t have to have a meeting of the Trinity, then bring in a few angels as advisors in order to come up with a suitable plan to deal with the situation Adam had created. The response was predetermined. And when God predetermines a thing, it equals being done. In our time-bound existence, we struggle to relate to an eternal God and how He functions. Past, present, and future are reality in our realm, but in His realm there is only now. **Hebrews 11:1** says, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* When? *“NOW!”*

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I want you to understand that God moved for your salvation before there was sin. God moved for your healing before you were sick. God created the earth and all the wealth in it, before you had a need. There will never be any more wealth in the earth than there is right now, or than there was the day He created Adam. God did it all, then on the seventh day He rested. **Genesis 2:1** *“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.”* **Deuteronomy 8:18** says, *“And you shall remember the LORD your God, for [it is] He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as [it is] this day.”* Faith cannot create wealth, nor can faith move God to create more wealth. But He has empowered you to get what is here already.

God moved in advance of the need, and in advance of the faith. So it is not need, nor is it faith that moves God to supply your need. And when we attempt to move him, we fail. **Philippians 4:19** says, *“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* Yes, it does say that He shall supply all your need. But where does He supply from? From His riches in glory. **Philippians 4:19 (New Living Translation)** says, *“And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.”*

Your Father was not willing for His children to suffer lack. **Psalms 34:10** says, *“The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good [thing.]”* Notice what Jesus said of Father in **Luke 12:32**. *“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”* **Matthew 6:8** says, *“your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”* God was moved to supply your needs by His own fatherly nature... because He is good. Jesus said in

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Matthew 7:9-11, *“Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 “Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”* **James 1:17** says, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

God laid up for you, everything you will ever need. He foresaw what you would need today, so He, by Christ Jesus, moved to supply that need, in Christ, before the fall. It wasn't faith that moved Him, it was His goodness, His nature.

Jesus told us in **Matthew 5:45** your Father *“...makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”* **2 Peter 1:3** says, *“His divine power has given to us all things that [pertain] to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.”* Even people who don't know God or anything about grace are daily recipients of a measure of grace. The last breath you took was unmerited, unearned, undeserved, yet God gives it to you, over and over, day by day.

We see the plan that was in place before the fall, was unveiled in **Genesis 3:14**, *““ So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.””* 4,000 years later, (**Galatians 4:4**) *“when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”*

THE REAL OBJECT OF THIS “GOD’S” FAITH

So where then, or what then is the object of real, Bible faith... the faith Jesus spoke of? Is it the mountain, or is it the Creator of the mountain? Is it the thing we are “believing God for,” or is it the finished work of Christ? When I “confess with my mouth,” (**Romans 10:9**), am I confessing my salvation, or am I confessing the Lordship of Jesus?

Romans 10:9-10, *“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

Let’s break down these verses. **Verse 9**, *“if you confess with your mouth.”* Confess what with your mouth? *“The Lord Jesus,”* or the Lordship of Jesus. *“And believe in your heart.”* So what am I to believe? Am I to believe I will be saved? That’s not what the verse tells us. **Verse 9** tells us to *verbally acknowledge His Lordship, and “believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead.”* Paul tells us to believe in Jesus’ resurrection. Where is the belief in the resurrection happening? *“In your heart,”* not in your head... your mind.

Let’s add in **verse 10** now. *“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* Notice, it does not say to believe you are righteous. **Verse 9** told us what to believe, that God raised Jesus from the dead. That belief results in righteousness. You will come to believe you are righteous, but it begins with belief in His resurrection. Scripture uses Abraham as an example of faith. **Romans 4:17** says, *“(as it is written, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.”*

Verse 19 says, *“And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.”*

Romans 4:3 says, *“For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”*

What did Abraham believe that was accounted to him for righteousness? He believed in resurrection... he believed God who gives life to the dead. This was not a one time thing. In **Genesis 22** we read how God tested Abraham. Due to the length of the passage, I’m only going to refer to a few points rather than including the entire text. You can get your Bible and read the whole chapter.

God had given Abraham a son in his old age. Then in **Genesis 22:2** God said to him, *“Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”* As the story goes, Abraham did as the Lord had said. He prepared an altar for the sacrifice of his son. He laid the wood on the altar, and laid Isaac there. With his knife in hand, he was ready to follow through with the offering. In **Genesis 22:11-13** we read, *“But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ So he said, ‘Here I am.’ And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.”* Here we see a type of God offering His Son, Jesus, to die on a tree for the sin of the world. Abraham, by this action, actually gave God the legal right to give His Son.

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I want you now to see what **Hebrews 11:17-19** says about Abraham. *“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”*

There is so much we could say here, but since we are talking about faith, let's stay with the subject. We talked about how Abraham believed God, specifically that He, *“gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.”* Abraham believed the God who resurrected his dead reproductive system. That faith that produced his son Isaac to begin with, prepared him to believe in resurrection when he needed to believe God could raise Isaac from the dead... preparing in advance that God would raise Jesus from the dead.

Please understand that with God, everything is tied to resurrection. Here is what Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 15:12-14**. *“Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching [is] empty and your faith [is] also empty.”* Your faith must be rooted in the resurrection. If Jesus is not risen, Paul said, *“your faith [is] empty.”* But if (since) He is risen, you are raised with Him and seated with Him in heavenly places.

The curse came into the world because Adam died, the result of eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. If the curse came because of Adam's death, the reversal of the curse can only come by a reversal of the death. **Romans 5:12-19** says, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the*

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world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-- 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift [is] not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift [is] not like [that which came] through the one who sinned. For the judgment [which came] from one [offense resulted] in condemnation, but the free gift [which came] from many offenses [resulted] in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's offense [judgment came] to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act [the free gift came] to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."

"Adam" means "man." God reversed man's death, and ultimately the curse, by bringing another Adam... another man... the last Adam... Jesus. By raising Him from the dead... in reversing death, He reversed the curse. Healing is the reversal of the curse of sickness. Provision is the reversal of the curse of poverty, and righteousness is the reversal of the curse of condemnation. The entirety of the curse was reversed with a resurrection. You were under the curse by virtue of the fact that you were in Adam, but you come under blessing when you are in Christ.

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Romans 1:4 gives us this explanation, Jesus was *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”* Forget blessing apart from the resurrection. Forget salvation apart from the resurrection. Forget faith apart from the resurrection. This is why your faith must be in the resurrected Christ. The resurrection finished the work.

Chapter Nine: So How do I Get God's Faith?

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* Did you know your mental capacity is not such that you could believe someone was raised from the dead, unless you could actually visually witness it. There is an old saying, “I’ll believe it when I see it.” Faith preachers love to get on that. (I can have a critical evaluation of faith preachers because I consider myself to be one.) They say, “if you will believe it you can see it. But did you notice the order of confessing and believing. Confession of Jesus’ lordship comes first, indicating a willingness to believe, at which time, God gifts you the ability to believe He raised Jesus from the dead. That’s why **Ephesians 2:8** says, the faith is *“not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God.”* All you have to do to be saved, is to be willing to be saved. God does the rest.

You see, God’s willingness for you to be saved was so powerful that Paul wrote to the Romans, **Romans 8:32**, *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* His desire for your salvation was so strong that He made it as easy as possible for you. He has literally done everything short of violating your free will, to save you. He took it all the way to the point where you must choose. But choosing is the one thing He cannot do for you.

Romans 8:38-39 says, *“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* God

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made your salvation so easy for you that nothing or no one , including the devil, can prevent it, if you choose Jesus.

This fact goes to everything God has provided for you in Christ. That's everything from healing, to wisdom, material provision, and on and on we could go. If Jesus paid for it at the cross, God wants you to have it. And this is where I was going with all of that. Everything you receive from God comes exactly the same way. God, your Father gave every good thing to Adam, or to all mankind at creation. The devil stole it from Adam, but God was not willing to accept that that's the way it would be. Jesus came into this world as the Last Adam. **1 Corinthians 15:45**, *"And so it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being.' The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit."* He paid with His blood to recover all losses. If you are willing to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus, God will gift the necessary faith to you... His faith, for you to believe unto..."

Let's show this from the story in **Mark 9:17-29**. *"Then one of the crowd answered and said, 'Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. 18 'And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.' 19 He answered him and said, 'O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.' 20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. 21 So He asked his father, 'How long has this been happening to him?' And he said, 'From childhood. 22 'And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.' 23 Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things [are] possible to him who believes.' 24 Immediately the*

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father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!' 25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: 'Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!' 26 Then [the spirit] cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, 'He is dead.' 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. 28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, 'Why could we not cast it out?' 29 So He said to them, 'This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.'"

This Father, in desperation, brought His son to Jesus to cast a deaf and mute spirit out of him. We are not told how old the son was, but we are told these manifestations had been happening since infancy. The fact that it was a "mute" spirit lets us know he should have been talking by this time. So at the very least, it had been a while that this father had witnessed this foul spirit convulsing his son. In **verse 22** we can almost hear the desperation in his voice as he said to Jesus, *"But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."* Then Jesus said these words to him, *"If you can believe, all things [are] possible to him who believes,"* to which the boy's father replied *"with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'"* In other words, "I believe enough that I brought him to you, but I must admit, I am struggling with unbelief."

Now before you judge this man too harshly, consider what your response would have been if you had watched your child go through this kind of torment for years. Allow me to speak to you today, the heart of the Lord as He reveals it in this story. I believe He was saying, "I understand what you are dealing with here, but I see you are willing to believe. That's all I need. I'll gift My faith to you, because I believe,

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and *‘all things [are] possible to him who believes.’*” And this is how God, by His Grace deals with us... He gifts His mountain moving, demon casting out faith to us. Are you willing to believe? Don’t worry about the unbelief. He believes, and you just need to believe you are in Him. Can you believe **Ephesians 1:6**? (*“To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”*)

FAITH COMES BY HEARING

You may quote **Romans 10:17**, *“So then faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* When God gifts His faith to you, there is a method by which He does it. Let’s back up a few verses, to **Romans 10:11-16**. Here we read, *“For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.’ 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For ‘whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.’ 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!’ 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘LORD, who has believed our report?’”*

This passage is literally packed absolutely full of revelation, if you will open your heart to receive it. **Verse 11** begins with the word, *“whoever.”* The use of that word takes the limits off, concerning who can personalize what he is about to talk about. In other words, you can personally apply this verse to yourself, *“if I believe on Him, I will not be put to shame.”* This word is not personalized until you, the reader, personalize it.

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Now let's begin to move on. The next word, "*believes.*" We have just narrowed the application. The verse applies to only those who believe. The next two words further narrow the verse. "*On Him.*" Now we have said how the belief must be directed in order for there to be an absence of shame.

Now let's look at the word "shame." In the Greek text it is the word, "kataischýnō." This is a compound word, the first part is the word "kata," which refers to something that comes down. The last part is the Greek word, "aischýnomai," meaning, disgrace, or to feel shame. When we put these words together we have "kataischýnō," meaning, to shame down, to disgrace, confound, dishonour, to be or make ashamed. Since **Romans 10:11** says this person will "*not*" be put to shame, we essentially have what **Romans 8:1** says, "*...no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...*"

Let's examine what it means to "*believe on Him.*" You may say, "I believe the Bible." That's great, you should believe the Bible, after all, it is truth... it is God's Word, and God cannot lie. Or maybe you say, "I believe in healing." That's also great, because Jesus provided for our healing through His work on the cross. But that is not what the verse says. There are many truths in the Bible, and we should believe them all. But we are looking at **Romans 10:11** right now, so let's stick with what is in front of us here. The verse says, if you will believe on HIM, you will not be ashamed, disgraced, dishonored, or confounded.

Let's tie this to our discussion of mountain moving faith from chapter three of this book. Rather than making the mountain the object of your faith, make Jesus, the creator of the mountain, your focus. Again, this is what we discussed concerning **Romans 10:9-10** concerning the confession of the Lordship of Jesus, and the belief in His resurrection.

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We're in perfect context here, being that this is the very next verse. **Verse 11** says it is believing upon Him that eliminates the shame of vain faith.

Let's bring, what is perhaps my favorite scripture into our discussion. **John 3:16**, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* Once again, this verse does not tell us to believe we will *"not perish,"* or that we will *"have everlasting life."* Although these are the results of believing, the belief is to be in Him.

Let's move on to **Romans 10:13** *"For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.'"* **Verse 9** includes belief in the resurrection, but thereafter we see that believing on Him, and calling on Him produces salvation. In this we see grace. As we showed earlier in this chapter, from the **ninth chapter of Mark's gospel**, that if we will express a willingness to believe, grace meets us at that point with the gift of "His" faith. Then in **Romans 10:14**, *"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?"* Once again we see this matter of belief in Him. You can't call on Jesus unless you first believe in Him. **Verse 14** continues, *"And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"*

Let me illustrate this. Let your mind go back to imagine you are a middle aged husband and father, living in the American country side in the late 1800's. One morning you rise early, hitch up your wagon and team of horses to go into town. You and your oldest son travel the few miles to purchase supplies, while your wife stays home with the other children. It is an ordinary first of the month trip to stock up on everything from seed for spring planting, to flour for biscuits, and nails to do some repairs around the house.

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After your visit to the general store, you and your son walk out of said business establishment, heading across the street to barbershop, since it's time for a haircut. As you step off the porch of the general store, into the street, a strange vehicle comes by, almost running over you. This did not look so different from carriages you were used to seeing... except there was no horse. How did it move without a horse? Conversations about this vehicle occupied the rest of the day's conversation... even all the way home.

When you arrive home that evening, after unloading the supplies from the wagon you set down to a supper your wife has prepared, beans, fried potatoes and fresh cornbread. As your wife and children start to ask about your day, in your excitement you cut them off mid sentence, telling them the story of the strange horseless carriage. Your wife disappoints you by saying, "That's quite a story you and Jr. concocted. Did it take you all the way home to come up with that one... almost run over by a horseless carriage. I never heard such a thing." She clearly could not believe in what she had never heard. But by next month's trip, she has been convinced by you continually talking about it. So she now wants to go with you so she can see the phenomenon. She clearly couldn't believe in the thing of which she had never heard. But she has come to believe by hearing and hearing the word of "the horseless carriage."

She clearly would have never believed in such a thing... how could she believe in what she had not heard? But how could she have ever heard if you had not had the encounter, and told her about it?

When I embrace Him, I embrace all that He is, I embrace all He has said, I embrace all He has done. When I embrace Him, I embrace every promise fulfilled. When I embrace Jesus in His Lordship, I embrace Him over life. **Colossians**

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2:9 says, *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”* He is everything God is. To put my trust, or belief in healing, is to embrace the benefit without benefactor. To embrace prosperity is to embrace the gift without the giver. And when I cast my faith toward the expectation of the provision rather than the provider, my faith is in vain.

Mark 10:17-23 gives us an object lesson of this truth. *“Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?’ 18 So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one [is] good but One, [that is,] God. 19 ‘You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ” 20 And he answered and said to Him, ‘Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.’ 21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.’ 22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. 23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!’”*

Then Jesus adds this in verse 24, “And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, ‘Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!’”

Jesus was not suggesting that the way to inherit eternal life is through extreme benevolence. He was saying rather, that the way to eternal life was in following Him rather than trusting in riches. He said, *“if you will follow Me, ‘you will have treasure in heaven’”*. And with that, I rest my case.

Chapter Ten: While We Were Still Sinners

Romans 5:8 says, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* The phrase, *“while we were yet sinners,”* indicates that His love toward us was not earned. He demonstrated His love. God put action to His love before we believed, and before we reached in His direction in any way at all. **Verse 9** says, *“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.”* Let’s walk through this carefully. God moved toward us first, while we were still sinners. Then, next in order, we have *“now been (past tense) justified by His blood.”* Until now, all movement has been God’s. In fact, the first action from us is seen in **verse 11**, we’ll get there in a moment.

The word “justified” in the Greek text, is the word, “dikaiōō,” meaning, to render (i.e. show or regard as) just or innocent: —free, to be righteous.

The next, **Romans 5:10** says, *“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”* Let’s examine this word “reconciled.” It is translated from the Greek Word, “katallássō,”. This is a compound word. The first part is “kata,” referring to something that descends down forcefully from above. The next part is from the word “allássō,” to make different:—change.” When we put these together we have a change of position between two parties, in this case, God toward man, from enemies to a favorable disposition. The use of “kata” indicates it to be the work of God alone, apart from our works... *“we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.”*

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Up until now, it has been God's work, in the past tense. But **Romans 5:10** moves to the future tense, *"we shall be saved by His life."* Now proceed to the **11th verse**, *"And not only [that,] but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."* We are now in the present tense. Here we find the first mention of a response from us toward God... *"we rejoice..."* Do you see why I say your faith must be in Him rather than any effort or action on your part. It was His blood, His death, His life... I believe He is my justification. I believe He is my reconciliation. I believe He is my salvation.

I have to say this here... WOW... JUST WOW!!!

Colossians 2:11-12 says, *"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with [Him] through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."*

I want to pull another word from this verse to discuss here. The word, *"circumcision."* Paul tells us we were *"circumcised with the circumcision made without hands."* He says the circumcision of Christ is to *"put off the body of sins."* He did not say, *"put off the sins of the body."* Circumcision is to cut off the flesh... cut off the efforts of the flesh. This is not a ceremonial thing we do, it is a new approach to God that is no longer through my self efforts. **Romans 3:23** defines sin for us, *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Sin is coming short of God's glory. But we have put, or cut off the body of sins, or the efforts of the flesh that always come short. Controlling my flesh is no longer my means to righteousness, or any of the blessings of God. It is not controlling, it is cutting off. I've cut off that means and

put all my hopes of anything from God, on the working of God in Christ.

Notice what Paul says to the Philippians about circumcision.

Philippians 3:1-3, *“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you [is] not tedious, but for you [it is] safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”* In **verse 2** he says, *“beware of the mutilation!”* In **Genesis 17:10** God introduced circumcision as a sign of His covenant with Abraham. Here we read, *“This [is] My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised.”* Every time we see God dealing with someone in this way in the Old Testament, it points to something in the New Testament that God would do through Christ. Study Abraham’s life and relationship with God. Every detail is an outward revelation of what God would do inwardly through Christ.

In **Philippians 3**, Paul tells three things to beware of. **Verse 2**, *“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!”* Look at how the **Amplified Bible** says this. *“Look out for the dogs [the Judaizers, the legalists], look out for the troublemakers, look out for the false circumcision [those who claim circumcision is necessary for salvation].”*

Verse 3 says, *“For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit”*

Can you see now where your faith must be placed? The your faith can never be about what your best efforts can rise to. Paul writes now in **Romans 8:1**, *“[There is] therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”*

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The words, “*according to*,” are from the Greek word, “kata,” which we have already talked about a couple of times in this book. Paul is talking about what descended upon you from self effort, or as we have stated, from the body of sin, or we could say, what is imposed on you by the “always short,” self efforts. He is saying, instead, live by what is bestowed on you from Christ... live by His perfection, His faith, from which there is no condemnation. You just focus your faith on the fact that you are in Christ.

Romans 8:2 continues, “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*” I am free from the law of sin and death which was imposed upon me according to, or down from the flesh, because the flesh has been cut off. **Verse 3**, “*For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God [did] by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*” The law did not fail. It was never meant to make me righteous 5 *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those [who live] according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded [is] death, but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Chapter Eleven: The Gift of Faith

Now as we have discussed already in this book, faith is a gift from God... His faith, gifted to you. **Ephesians 2:8** says, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God...”* But in this chapter, we will explore another kind of faith. **1 Corinthians 12:1-11** lists nine spiritual gifts, or we could say, manifestations of the spirit. Here we read, *“Now concerning spiritual [gifts,] brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: 2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. 4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit [of all:] 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another [different] kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”*

I want to spend some time here explaining why this “gift of faith” is different from the faith that God has dealt to all believers. Notice how the **Amplified Bible Classic Edition** translates **1 Corinthians 12:1**. *“NOW ABOUT the spiritual gifts (the special endowments of supernatural energy), brethren, I do not want you to be misinformed.”*

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Notice the words in parentheses here, “*special endowments of supernatural energy.*” In **Romans 12:3**, notice these words, “*God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*”

Ephesians 2:8 says you are saved *through faith*. So clearly, everyone who is saved has a certain faith... the faith the just live by (**Romans 1:17**, **Galatians 3:11**, **Hebrews 10:38**), it is the faith of the Son of God (**Galatians 2:20**). But this gift of faith that faith. Paul writes to the Corinthians about is a “special endowment of supernatural energy.

If one of these nine gifts is supernatural, all nine are supernatural, the gift of faith is a supernatural faith. Let’s find out if they are natural, or supernatural. **1 Corinthians 12:8-10** lists the nine; gifts. *the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, gifts of healings, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and faith.* I intentionally put faith last because it is the one we are studying here. Let’s look at each one and decide, natural or supernatural.

1. Word of wisdom. This is the gift by which a person has insight into the future. This is not suspicion, it is not insights based on principles of cause and effect. This is not even reading your Bible to gain vision into the future. In other words, it is not reading Jesus’ words and therefore knowing that He will come again. This is the gift by which the ancient prophets spoke of things that actually took place, sometimes thousands of years later. Now I ask, is that natural, or supernatural?

2. Word of knowledge. This gift gives knowledge of facts and events, either past or present, that could not be known by natural means. This is the gift by which secrets of men’s hearts are made known. This is the gift by which the prophet Elisha revealed to the king of Israel, the secret plots spoken in the bedroom of the king of Syria. Read about it in **2 Kings**

chapter 6. Now answer this. Was this natural knowledge, or was it supernatural?

3. Gifts of healings. In **Mark 16:17-18** Jesus said, *“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 “they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”* This is a sign that should follow all believers, according to Jesus’ own words. However, there are those manifestations of what we would call, “healing miracles.” Generally speaking, these are instantaneous manifestations, and are without a doubt, supernatural.

4. Working of miracles. This one is easy. Can you, by any natural means turn water into wine, walk on water or roll back the waters of a sea? I think this gift is defiantly supernatural.

5. The gift of prophecy. This gift is defined as a word from the Lord, spoken by the Holy Spirit, through a human vessel. Apostle Paul says it is for edification, exhortation, and comfort. Could you speak such a word by natural means? Certainly you could. But I remind you, if one of these is supernatural, all nine are supernatural, and we just showed four of the mentioned gifts to be supernatural. So this one must be supernatural as well.

6. Discerning of spirits. Just as I said of the Word of wisdom, this is not suspicion, which is often nothing more than distrust. That is no gift. This is a gift by which the one operating in it, can actually see into the spiritual realm in order to discern the purpose and intents of the heart... whether good or evil. This is the gift by which one person in the room can see an angel, but nobody else in the crowd

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can see it. This is not seeing with natural eyes, but spirit eyes. This gift is most defiantly supernatural.

7. Tongues. By this gift an individual will speak in a language they have never learned. In **1 Corinthians chapter 13**, Paul talks about this gift empowering an individual to speak with tongues of men or of angels.

There is much that can be taught about the gift of tongues, and different aspects of this gift we could discuss, but for our purposes here, we're only dealing with one question, is the gift of faith, the faith believers are to live by every day, or is it a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit? If we determine tongues to be a supernatural manifestation, then the gift of faith is also a supernatural manifestation.

8. Interpretation of tongues. In the case of the Day of Pentecost in **Acts 2:6**. *“And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.”* In this case, Holy Spirit gave the interpretation of the tongues, directly to the ears of the hearers. I think this makes it abundantly clear that this gift is, without a doubt, a supernatural manifestation.

9. The gift of faith. As in all of these gifts, there is a level that all believers should walk in, because all believers have the life of Christ resident on the inside of them. But these gifts take it to another level. **1 Corinthians 12:11** tells us, *“one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”*

First notice, Holy Spirit “works all these things.” Holy Spirit will never work through you without your permission and cooperation, which we give by our pursuit and desire. **1**

Corinthians 14:1 says, *“Pursue love, and desire spiritual [gifts,] but especially that you may prophesy.”*

Secondly, notice that He distributes. This is from the Greek word, diairéō; to separate, i.e. distribute:—divide. At the time of this writing, we have just come through the Christmas season. As our family tradition is, we have gifts for one another, all of which are wrapped and placed under a Christmas tree. At the time of our family Christmas celebration, one person will take the gifts and “distribute” them according to the names on the outside of the packages. No one person gets all of the gifts, but all get gifts. Holy Spirit has gifts that He distributes to the body of Christ. While no one gets all the gifts, all get gifts.

The next thing I want you to notice is how He distributes these gifts... *“individually as He wills.”* It is the discretion of the giver, who gets what gift. Holy Spirit is the giver and the distributor.

Usually in the month of November, family members begin to ask other family members, “what do you want for Christmas?” Paul says in **1 Corinthians 12:31**, *“But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.”* I remember, as a child, I would look through catalogues to find what I wanted, then make a list. My parents would then choose from my list. Paul said to desire gifts, but not just any gifts, *“desire the best gifts.”* The reason I made a list is because my parents wanted to give me the best gifts, which would be the one(s) I wanted. Holy Spirit wants to give you the best gift, the one needed at the time. If you are needing to minister to a sick person, which of the nine gifts do you need? Obviously, a gift of healing. If you are ministering to a person who doesn’t believe God knows or cares for them, what would be the best gift.

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Probably the word of knowledge, as it demonstrates that God does know and care.

The gift of faith in scripture is often seen in times that prolonged faith is needed. This is the faith that Abraham functioned in as He waited for 25 years for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise to give him a son to be his heir ¹⁴. Let me share with you my own experience with the gift of faith. My wife and I had operated in this faith concerning our children all of their lives without even realizing it, until the Lord pointed it out to me after they both were adults. I realized, there had never been a point in time when we ever even considered that they might not serve the Lord. Raising them was not a struggle concerning their choice to follow Jesus or not. That does not mean they never made mistakes, but when they did, our confidence was not shaken. Today, both of my children actively serve Jesus, along with their families. I can emphatically say, this was the best gift we could have had for parenting.

This is a special endowment of faith for a specific purpose. Paul, by the Holy Spirit said, in **1 Corinthians 12:31**, *"But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way."* It would be contrary to the character and nature of God to frustrate His children, telling them to desire

¹⁴ **Genesis 12:4** *So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram [was] seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.*

Genesis 12:7 *Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.*

Genesis 21:5 *Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.*

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something they cannot have. If He through the Apostle, told us the best gifts, it must mean we can have the best gifts. Now before you quote **1 Corinthians 12:11**, (*“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills,”*) saying, it’s as the Spirit wills, I’m going to tell you, this is what the Spirit wills. If it were not, He would not have said it.

Every one of these nine gifts are for a specific time and purpose. No one operates in any of these gifts every day for every purpose. If I did, I would never again go to the grocery store. I would just keep multiplying the food I have so it would never run out. Jesus only multiplied loaves and fish twice that we have record of, and in both instances, it was because He had a massive crowd that came to hear Him teach, but very little food was available.

Nobody speaks with tongues all the time. I actually had a woman come by the church once who apparently had some mental issues. I would ask her a question, and she would answer me in tongues... no interpretation. Needless to say, our conversation did not get very far. I have no idea who she was, where she came from, or what she wanted from me. I shared that to say, all nine of these gifts, including the gift of faith, are special endowments by the Spirit for a specific time and purpose. Tongues was not needed that day. Both this woman and I spoke English just fine, and she did not need a gift of the Spirit to answer the simple questions I asked her... who are you, and what do you need? You do not need the “gift of faith” for everyday life. **Galatians 2:20** tells me I am to *“live by faith in (of) the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

We should all be encouragers. We all have wisdom, knowledge and discernment that comes simply from the life

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of Christ in us. All believers should lay hands on the sick and see their recovery. All believers should live by faith.

Paul says some different things here in **1 Corinthians 12**. Let's see what he said that indicate this is different from what he said in the above mentioned verses. First he says in **verse 4**, *"There are diversities of gifts."* In other words, "faith" is only one of the special endowments of supernatural energy he is going to talk about. These endowments, though different, are of *"the same Spirit."* The reason for different endowments, is because, (**verse 5**) *"There are differences of ministries... And there are diversities of activities."* So, different gifts for different purposes.

Next, I want you to notice, though he lists nine separate gifts, he group them all together under the heading of "spiritual gifts." He says in **verses 5-6**, it is *"the same Lord... the same God... who works all in all."* What Paul says about one of the nine, how it functions, where it comes from, who manifests the gift, is true of the other eight. **Verse 7** calls these gifts, all nine of them, *"the manifestation of the Spirit."* These are not manifestations of the reborn human which has been joined to the Lord. This is Holy Spirit, personally manifesting through a human vessel.

Now look at the rest of **verse 7**, and on through **verse 11**. *"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit [of all:] 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another [different] kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one*

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individually as He wills.” Let’s pull a few more truths out of this.

Verse 7 let’s us know that “*each one*” can expect to have Holy Spirit manifesting through them, one or more of these gifts, but not for their own benefit. It tells us the manifestations are for the benefit of all. Holy Spirit may manifest healing through someone, but the primary beneficiary will be the person needing healing.

Notice in **verse 8** Paul says, “*to one is given the word of wisdom...*” and in **verse 9** he says, “*to another faith.*” If we jump ahead to **verses 29-30** we read, “[*Are*] all apostles? [*Are*] all prophets? [*Are*] all teachers? [*Are*] all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” The implied answer to these questions is, no! The same question could have been asked, do all have the gift of faith.

Now remember, this chapter is about the gift of faith specifically, so there is much about spiritual gifts that will not be said. We would need another book or books to teach everything about those gifts. So let’s bring our focus back in to this one gift.

Chapter Twelve: In Conclusion

I trust this book has challenged you to rethink some of the ideas you may have had about faith. Perhaps you had a good grasp on the subject prior to reading this book, but maybe you were like me, wondering how to reconcile some of the truths you have learned on the subject of grace, with what you knew about faith. When much of what we have believed about faith amounts to self effort, or works of the flesh. We had so much faith in our faith.

Many of us who started out in legalism, then came into faith teaching, never really shook of the effects of our law based thinking. We knew what **Galatians 3:2-5** said about faith, *“This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed [it was] in vain? 5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, [does He do it] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”*

We thought faith was the end game, not realizing that faith was the mechanism to receive the grace of God.

Ephesians 2:8 says, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God...”* We thought grace was at odds with faith. But the conflict was really in our thinking. We mentally assented to **Ephesians 2:8**, that faith was the gift of God rather than of our own accomplishment, but what we really believed, if the truth were revealed, is that faith was largely of our own doing... this is what you do, this is what you say. **Ephesians 2:9** says faith is *“not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* But we often made it about the boasting. When we received blessing from the Lord, we boasted about our faith that

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obtained it, rather than how good our Father is, and the grace of Jesus is. Grace however, quiets the self righteous arrogance.

You see, my greatest accomplishments, I actually didn't accomplish. I was simply privileged to participate in. The pendulum has swung from "I am powerless and nothing," all the way to the other side of "I am God's man of faith, I can do anything by my great faith," and now back to the center where Jesus is, where nothing is impossible, and He has invited me to partner with Him. **1 Corinthians 3:9** says, *"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, [you are] God's building."* The King James Version says, *"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building."*

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He committed the dispensation of the gospel to the new race of believers, the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation¹⁵. It was God who chose to partner with us. It is the Work of Jesus at the cross that supplies the super, but it is you and I who supply the natural, to give the world the supernatural. It is you who give the hands, but it is Holy Spirit's anointing that makes the hands powerful. In my book, "Holy Spirit: Your Partnership With Him," I have gone in depth about this.

Apostle Paul wrote, in **Philippians 3:3**, *"For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."*

¹⁵ 1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

But you [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

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Introduction

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