

A LIFE OF FAITH



ARMIN KRITZINGER

CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Does God Exist?	2
Chapter 2 – What is Faith?	9
Chapter 3 – Living by Faith	16
Chapter 4 – Great Faith and Little Faith	25
Chapter 5 – Growing Your Faith	34
Chapter 6 – In God’s Image	41
Chapter 7 – The Power of Sin	48
Chapter 8 – Free from Sin	54
Chapter 9 – Victory over Sin	61

©2020 Armin Kritzingner

All Rights Reserved.

Book Edited Version 4

arminkritzingner@live.com

www.trustthisword.com

YouTube: Armin Kritzingner

CHAPTER 1

Does God Exist?



Have you ever heard about Santa Claus? I was told that he was an old, fat man that wears red and white, and stays in the North Pole. Once a year, during Christmas, they said that he would give children gifts. Santa Claus doesn't exist. He is a lie. I sadly believed a lie for many years. Many children still believe that Santa exists. Just because we

believe something doesn't make it true. We need to look at the facts. Facts alone indicate what is true.

Some people believe that all religions are actually lies that were created to encourage the people from different cultures to live good lives. Some people also believe that all religions are good and therefore it doesn't matter what religion you follow. But what are their facts? We need to look at the facts. Just because people have these ideas doesn't make it true. I have heard some Christians say that God answers their prayers and therefore they know that He exists. That might be convincing for them personally, but it won't be convincing for my Muslim friend who believes that his prayers have also been answered and therefore believes that he is right. Nor for my Buddhist friend who believes her prayers have also been answered and therefore she is right. You see, personal experience is fact for the one who had that experience, but not necessarily for everyone else, because others cannot always validate if that person's personal experience is true or simply a lie made up to prove a point.

I've never met a person who enjoys being lied to. So when it comes to the existence of God, is it all a lie, like Santa Claus, or is it a fact? Is there evidence for the existence of God?

1. What does the Bible teach is evidence that someone is a god?

“Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods” (Isaiah 41:23)

NOTE: The Bible makes it clear that if someone can predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy then we may know that he/she is a god. Not 90%, and not 99.99%, but 100% accuracy. It is not scientifically possible, or natural, for anyone to be able to predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy. Because it is not natural, it is supernatural. If somebody can fulfill this then we may know that they have a supernatural power. There are many people who guess about the future. There might even be those who get it right 99.99% of the time, but the Bible says only 100% accuracy will do. If someone is able to make detailed predictions about the future, and then pull it off 100% of the time, we should be willing to call that person a god with supernatural power.

2. What does the God of the Bible claim about Himself?

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me” (Isaiah 46:9)

NOTE: The God of the Bible makes a bold statement by claiming that He alone is God and there is none else.

3. What is God’s reason, in verse 10, for the bold statement He made in verse 9?

“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done” (Isaiah 46:10)

NOTE: The God of the Bible claims that He is able to predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy. He claims that this supernatural power shows that He is God and there is none else. Also see Isaiah 42:8-9.

4. Did Jesus say something similar in the Bible?

“Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he” (John 13:19)

NOTE: Jesus, in the New Testament, makes a very similar statement to what we found in the Old Testament in Isaiah 46:9-10. Jesus claims that He can predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy and that this supernatural power will show that He is special.

5. What did God predict concerning ancient Babylon?

“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.” (Isaiah 13:19-20)



NOTE: The God of the Bible said that ancient Babylon shall never be inhabited or dwelt in again. Is this true today? Go to the site of ancient Babylon today and you will find it is in ruins and uninhabited just as God said it would be. Also see Jeremiah 51:26, 37

6. Did God predict accurately the downfall of Egypt? Will it be a world power again?

“It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.” (Ezekiel 29:15)

NOTE: Read also Ezekiel 30:4, 12-13. Egypt was at one time the leading nation of the world. It was a center of the arts, sciences and religions.

7. What was God's prediction concerning ancient Tyre?

“And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 26:12-14)

NOTE: God foretold the manner of the destruction and the unlikely millennia-long future of the site. Tyre was a city for business people. Nebuchadnezzar attacked the mainland Tyre and destroyed it. Babylon never conquered the island, but placed a commissioner on the island whose duty it was to make sure that the proper tribute was paid regularly to Babylon. Tyre on the mainland was not rebuilt at that time but the island city continued past the Persian period. When Alexander threatened Tyre, this island city refused to submit to Grecian control. So Alexander, using timbers and debris from the old city of Tyre, built a road through the water to the island and fulfilled the prophecy of Ezekiel 26:12. His army marched over the water to the island and destroyed the city. He killed the leaders and sold the people as slaves. The city was rebuilt but it wasn't as great as before. Later in A.D. 1291 it was almost completely destroyed by the Saracens. The road that Alexander built through the water has increased through the years to a width of almost 800metres. Some of the ancient buildings can still be seen in the water. There is still a fishing harbor on the north side of the island. The great nation of Ezekiel's day is no more and it is just as God said it would be.

8. What events did God predict to happen in nature?

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.”

(Revelation 6:12-13)



NOTE: These events have all been fulfilled in exact order. In fulfillment of this prophecy, there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles. In Africa the shock was almost as severe as in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed; and a short distance from Morocco, a village containing eight or ten thousand inhabitants was swallowed up. A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain and Africa engulfing cities and causing great destruction. Twenty-five years later appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy - the darkening of the sun and moon. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled. “The Dark Day, May 19, 1780 - so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day extending over all New England... The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known.” Noah Webster Dictionary, ed. 1869. “Candles were used... Fowls retired to their roosts and went to sleep, cattle gathered at the pasture bars and lowed, frogs peeped, birds sang their evening songs, and bats flew about. But the human knew that night had not come” The Essex Antiquarian, April, 1899, vol. 3, No. 4, pp. 53, 54. After midnight the darkness disappeared and the moon appeared. “The moon, which was at its full, had the appearance of blood. The alarm that it caused and the frequent talk

about it impressed it deeply on my mind” Milo Bostwick, *Stone's History of Beverly*, Massachusetts. Then Revelation 6:13 reached its fulfillment in 1833. “Probably the most remarkable of all the meteoric showers... was that of the Leonids, on November 12, 1833. The number...was estimated as high as 200, 000 an hour for five or six hours.” Charles A. Young, *Manual of Astronomy*, p. 469. “People said they had no difficulty reading the newspaper all night without lighting a candle.” *American Journal of Science and Arts*, Volume XXV, 1834. We have scientific and historical evidence that the Bible was written before these prophecies were fulfilled. Once again, it happened just as God said it would be. Many people do not know these facts and have never even heard about them.

9. Is it important for us to be 100% sure that God exists?

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is” (Hebrews 11:6)

NOTE: Satan, the enemy of God, doesn't want people to see the evidence for God's existence. That is why there are so many different interpretations when it comes to Bible prophecy. Prophecy confirms God's existence.

Summary

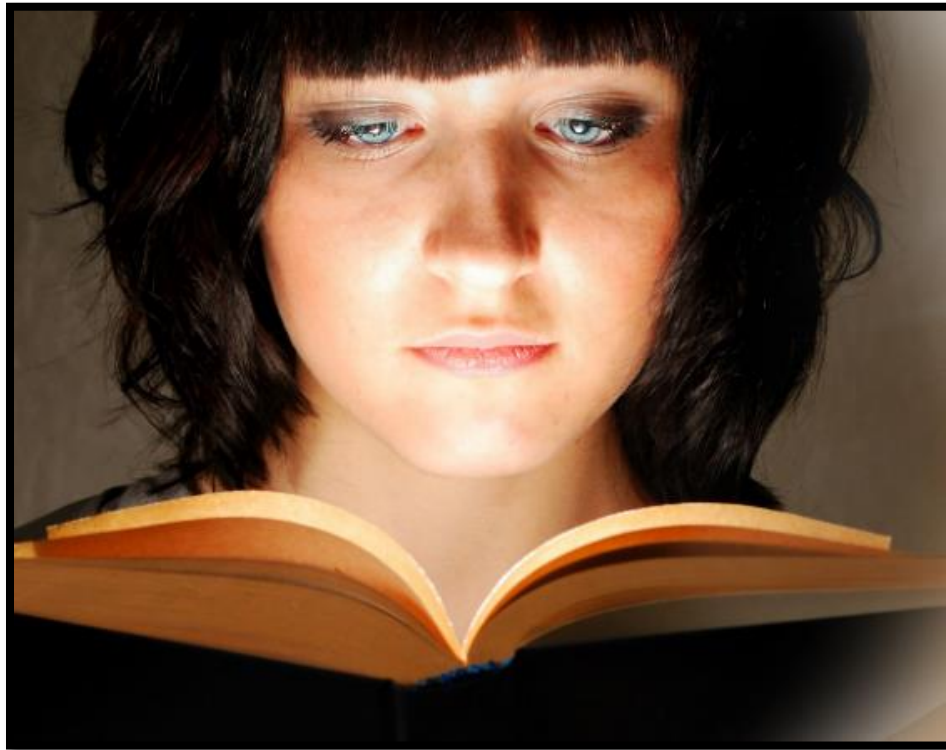
Just because our parents or teachers taught us something doesn't make it true. People have been shown to be wrong time and time again. We need to look at the facts. The Bible makes it clear that if someone can predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy then we may know that he/she is a god. This ability is not natural, and therefore supernatural. The God of the Bible claims that He alone has this supernatural ability and therefore He is God alone. The Bible is filled with examples of where the God of the Bible predicted detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy before they took place. What is the evidence for God's existence? The Word of God (Bible) predicting detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy is evidence for God's existence. If the Word is true and the predictions are fulfilled, then logically the One who spoke the Word must exist and be true also. No other scripture has genuinely shown itself to have been full of foreknowledge. The Bible, therefore, has an edge over other scriptures like the

Koran, the Book of Mormon, the Church Fathers, the scriptures of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and the unwritten ideas of the animalistic tribes. This edge also sets it above the research of modern men. This edge is predictive prophecy – the ability of the God of the Bible to predict detailed events in the future with 100% accuracy. The existence of God is a fact.

Your Response

Now that you have seen that predictive prophecy is evidence for the existence of God, are you willing to commit to learn more about Him through His Word?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 2

What is Faith?

The world has created many superheroes that have superpowers. Some superheroes have the ability to fly. Other superheroes have super strength. Many children dream about what kind of superpowers they would have had if they were superheroes.



But the superheroes of the world do not exist. They are all a bunch of lies. However, in the previous lesson, entitled “Chapter 1 - Does God Exist?”, we saw that there is evidence for the existence of God. The existence of God is a fact, and not a lie. God’s predictive prophecies in the Bible prove His existence. But why does God have this ability to predict detailed future events with 100% accuracy? What does the Bible say about God’s superpower? Faith helps us to understand the answer to these questions.

1. What does the Bible teach is necessary to please God?

“But without faith it is impossible to please him” (Hebrews 11:6)

NOTE: The reason for this is that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23), and of course sin cannot please God. Faith then must be very important.

2. How does the Bible say we should live?

“The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17)

NOTE: If God's people are to live by faith, then it is necessary to know what faith is. Many people know what the definition of faith is, but they do not know what the thing is. They do not grasp the idea that is in the definition.

3. Where should we look if we want to know what faith is?

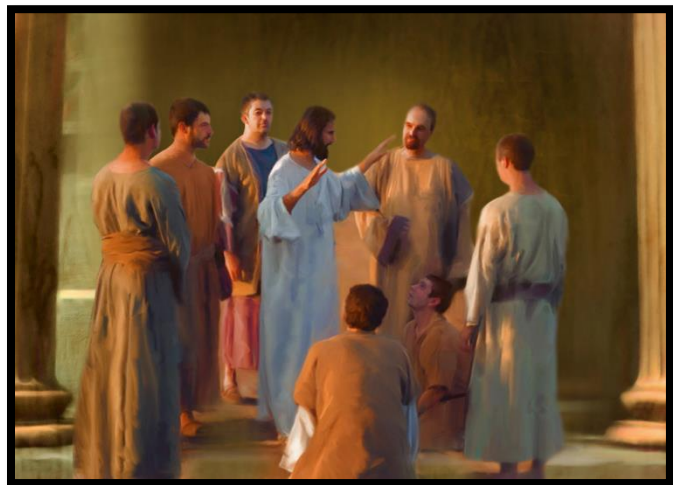
“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

(Romans 10:17)

NOTE: If faith comes by the Word of God, then it is in the Word that we must look for it.

4. Who in the Bible had great faith according to Jesus?

“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will



come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed . . . When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." (Matthew 8:5-10)

NOTE: Jesus is "the Author... of faith," (Hebrews 12:2) and He says that the centurion had "faith" - yes, even "great faith." There is what Jesus pronounces faith. When we find what that is, we have found faith. To know what that is, is to know what faith is.

5. The centurion wanted Jesus to heal his servant. How did he want Jesus to do it?

“The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.” (Matthew 8:8)

NOTE: Now what did the centurion expect would do the work? The Word ONLY. Upon what did he depend for the healing of his servant? Upon the Word ONLY. Now, dear reader, what is faith? Faith is expecting the Word of God itself to do what the Word says and depending upon that Word itself to do what the Word says. Faith is understanding that God’s Word is always true, because the Word makes itself true.

6. How can God’s Word make itself true?

“For the word of God is quick [alive], and powerful” (Hebrews 4:12)

NOTE: God’s Word is a living Word. His Word has life. It is also powerful. The word “powerful” literally means to be “full of power”.

7. Full of what power is God’s Word?

“For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”
(Psalm 33:9)

NOTE: Before He spoke, there was nothing. After He spoke, "it was." Only by speaking, it was. What caused it to be? The Word only. God has a superpower: His Word is creative. That means that His Word is filled with creative power to create and accomplish whatever He wants His Word to accomplish. Humans do not have this superpower. Our word is descriptive. Our word describes things, but cannot create things. The centurion in Matthew 8 knew that God’s Word was creative, and therefore He knew that Jesus could heal his servant by speaking the Word only.

8. What does God say will accomplish what He wants?

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11)

NOTE: God does not need to do something apart from His Word. The creative power in His Word will do what He pleases.

9. What is the difference between man’s word and God’s Word?

“God is not a man, that he should lie” (Numbers 23:19)

“in which it was impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18)

NOTE: Why is it impossible for God to lie?

It is not impossible for God to lie only because He does not want to lie, but also because He cannot. And He cannot lie, because it is impossible. Why is it impossible? Because when He speaks, the creative power is in the Word spoken, so that “the word only” causes the thing to be so. This is the difference between the Word of God and the word of man. Man may speak a word and it not be so because there is no power in his word to perform the thing spoken. Man must do something in addition to speaking the word to make his word true. But when God speaks, the thing is. It is, simply because He has spoken. The Word accomplishes that which He spoke and it is not necessary that God, as man, must do something in addition to the Word spoken. God speaks “the word only” and the thing is accomplished. Thus man can lie, because to speak something that is not, is to lie.



And man can lie when speaking what is not, because there is no power in his word itself to cause the thing to be as spoken. With God this is impossible. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). If man points at a blind man and says that he is a blind, then man is simply describing the other man. If man points at a blind man and says that the blind man can see, then man will be a liar. Not so with God. God's Word has creative power. If God points at a blind man and says that he will see, then the blind man will see, because the creative power in God's Word will make him to see.

10. How did God create the universe?

“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made” (Psalm 33:6)

NOTE: He who understands what faith is knows that the Word of God is creative and therefore able to produce whatever God speaks. Therefore, we can understand, and not guess, that the worlds were produced, were made to exist, by the Word of God. That is why “through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3). Understanding faith, that God's Word is creative in nature, should settle the question of evolution versus creation forever. “God... calleth those things which be not as though they were” (Romans 4:17).

11. What is the evidence that God's Word has creative power?

“I am the LORD: that is my name... Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.” (Isaiah 42:8-9)

“I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass” (Isaiah 48:3)

NOTE: Fulfilled predictive prophecies about God's will are evidence that God's Word is creative in nature. In the previous lesson, entitled “Chapter 1 - Does God Exist?”, we saw that fulfilled predictive prophecies are evidence for the existence

of God. What is a fulfilled prophecy? It is simply God's Word saying that something will happen, and then it happens exactly like His Word said it would. Why? Because His Word has creative power. This is also why when the Word of God is spoken for a certain time, as in a prophecy for hundreds of years in the future, when that time actually has arrived, that Word is fulfilled. It is not fulfilled because God did something apart from His Word, but because the Word was spoken for that specific time, and in that Word is the creative power which causes the Word at that time to produce the thing that was spoken by God. This is specifically talking about prophecies where God is at work to accomplish His will, not future evil. For the prophesied future works of evil, God does not predestine or empower them, but can reveal them because of His divine foreknowledge.

12. What is the Bible's definition for faith?

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

NOTE: Because God's Word has creative power and so is able to produce in very substance the thing which the Word spoke, it is plain enough that faith is the substance of things hoped for. And because God's Word has creative power and therefore is able to produce and cause to appear what otherwise would never exist, and never be seen, it is plain enough that faith is "the evidence of things not seen."

Summary

God has a superpower: His Word is creative. This superpower also includes many other superpowers because God's Word has power in itself to fulfil whatever that Word should do. If God says that there should be birds, then His creative Word will make birds. If God says that He can fly, then His creative Word will make it possible for Him to fly. That is why the Bible teaches that "with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). This also means that God, unlike man, can never lie, because His Word is creative. Our words are never creative. It was also God's creative Word that created the universe. Genesis 1 records how God spoke "and it was so". God's fulfilled predictive prophecies, as seen in the previous lesson, entitled "Chapter 1 - Does God Exist?", are evidence that God's Word is creative

in nature. Certain fulfilled predictive prophecies about God's will do not only prove the existence of God, but also prove the creative power of His Word. It is a fact that there is a God that exists, and that His Word has creative power.

Your Response

Do you accept that God's Word is creative and therefore His Word is always true?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 3

Living by Faith



We live in an interesting world. Some doctors are constantly sick. Some fitness coaches are unfit and overweight. Some mathematics teachers in school cannot pass a mathematics exam. What a tragedy! One reason for tragedies like these is that many people have a theoretical knowledge about something, but they do not apply that theoretical understanding in practical daily life.

When the doctor understands what to do to remain healthy, but doesn't do it, then he will get sick. When the fitness coach understands what to do to remain fit, but doesn't do it, then she will remain unfit. When the mathematics teacher understands how to solve the problem, but does not use that understanding, then he won't solve the problem.

In a previous lesson (Chapter 2 – What is Faith?) we learnt what the Bible teaches regarding faith. Faith is understanding that God's Word is always true because God's Word has creative power to fulfil itself.

1. Is simply understanding what faith is enough to please God?

“the devils also believe, and tremble.” (James 2:19)

NOTE: The Bible is clear that even Satan and his followers (the enemies of God) understand what faith is. They also understand that God exists and that His Word has creative power. They have seen God creating by His Word.

2. When I understand that God's Word is always true because it has creative power, what does God expect me to do with this knowledge?

"The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17)

NOTE: God expects that His people should live according to the understanding that His Word is always true because it has creative power. God wants us to exercise faith, or "to do" faith, and then we will have life.

3. How did Jesus say we should live?

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

(Matthew 4:4)

NOTE: Here Jesus makes it clear that God's people should live by every Word that proceeds out of God's mouth. In Romans 1:17 Paul made it clear that God's people live by faith. These two passages teach the same idea. Remember that faith is understanding that God's Word is always true because it has creative power. And so it becomes very clear that living by faith is living by every Word that proceeds from God's mouth. It is important to note that Jesus didn't say that we will live by simply understanding every Word that proceeds out of God's mouth. Jesus expects that we live according to every Word that proceeds out of God's mouth, and then His Words will give us life.

4. What type of faith do we have if we only understand that God's Word is always true because it has creative power, but we do not live according to that understanding?

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:17)

NOTE: The Bible calls it a dead faith. If this is what a dead faith is, then what will we call a living faith? A living faith will be when we understand what faith is and live according to that understanding.

5. Can we choose whether we want to live by faith or not?

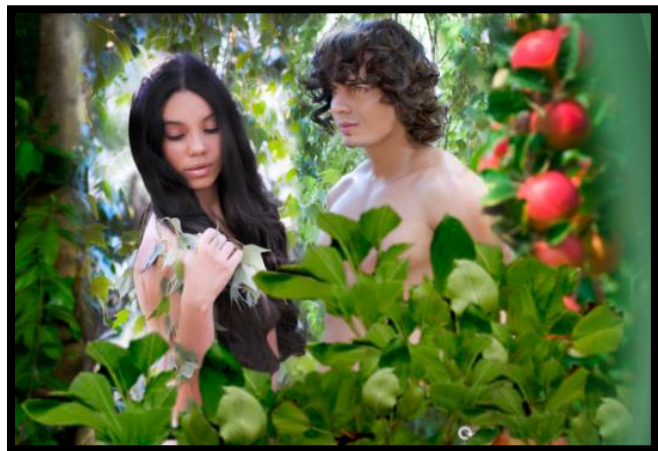
“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

NOTE: God has given us the freedom of choice. Love is a choice and therefore it can never be forced. God gives us His Word and says that if we choose to live according to His Word we will have life. He says that if we choose to live according to the word of another we will die.

6. Who else had to choose to exercise faith in God’s Word and live, or not live by faith and die?

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17)

NOTE: As long as Adam and Eve chose to live by faith, to live according to every Word that God spoke, they would have eternal life. But God warned them that if they choose to live according to the word of another then they will have to die. Eating from the forbidden tree would mean that they do not exercise faith in God’s Word.



7. What does Jesus desire us to choose?

“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” (Mark 9:23)

NOTE: Jesus wants us to choose to live according to God’s Word. The moon doesn’t have freedom of choice, and if God told the moon to travel around the earth then the moon will obey the voice of God and travel around the earth because the power in God’s Word will enable it to do so. But God created humans with the freedom of choice. That means that He will not force Himself into our lives. When He gives you His Word, filled with power, then that power will only be available to you if you choose to allow it in your life. Remember that Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). If your friend puts a loaf of bread on the table, then you can choose whether you want to eat it or not. If you choose to eat it, then you will receive the nutrients from the bread. If you choose not to eat it, then you will receive nothing from that loaf of bread. This is how it works with God’s Word. God makes His Word available to you, but He does not force you to live according to it. If you choose to allow that Word in your life and thus live according to His Word, then you will receive the power from that Word. If you choose not to allow that Word in your life, then you will receive no power from it. It is not having bread that fills you, but eating it. It is not having God’s Word that empowers you, but it is living according to that Word because you believe it has power in itself that will empower you.

8. What important lesson did Abraham and Sarah learn?

“And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD” (Genesis 15:5-6)



NOTE: When Abram was more than eighty years old and had no child, God told him that he would have a child. Abram

accepted the word of God and believed that God's Word will create what was spoken by God. But Sarai, his wife, did not put her expectation upon the Word of God only. She made her own plan to bring forth a child. She gave her servant to Abram, and the servant conceived a child. But God did not recognize this child as the promised one. God changed Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai to Sarah. God taught Abraham and Sarah that in carrying out the promise of God, nothing but dependence upon God's Word to fulfill the promise will do. Our own plans just bring trouble and delay God's promises. But when Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 89 they only relied on the creative Word of God to fulfill the promise of a child. All works, devices, plans and efforts of their own were excluded and they lived by faith alone. God's Word fulfilled itself and Isaac, the child of promise, was born. "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."
(Hebrews 11:11).

9. Abraham is called the father of faith. Why is this so?

"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."
(Genesis 22:2)

NOTE: Abraham received Isaac from God by trusting the Word of God only. After Isaac was born, God had confirmed the Word by declaring, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Genesis 21:12. And now Abraham was told to offer Isaac for a burnt offering! But if Isaac is dead, what will become of the promise of the blessing of all nations in him? How can Isaac's seed be as innumerable as the stars of heaven if he is dead? Here Abraham had to trust the Word of God as against the Word of God! And Abraham did it, hoping against hope. Abraham did not insist that God should explain how seed as the stars of heaven could be called in Isaac if he is to die. Abraham understood that faith is believing that God's Word is always true because it has creative power, and Abraham lived according to this understanding. It was settled in Abraham's mind. He arose and took his servants and Isaac and went three days' journey. Abraham said unto his servants, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come

again to you” (Genesis 22:5). Who will go? “I and the lad will go.” And who will come again? “I and the lad will go... and come again to you.” Abraham expected to have Isaac come back with him as certainly as that he went with him. Hebrews 11:17-19, “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.” Abraham expected to offer Isaac for a burnt offering and expected then to see Isaac rise from the ashes and go back with him. Why? Because he knew that the Word of God said that in Isaac shall his seed be called and that his seed shall be as the stars of heaven. Abraham would trust that Word only, that it would never fail, because he knew that God cannot lie because His Word is creative. On the mountain God provided another sacrifice in Isaac’s place, and Abraham and Isaac came down from the mountain alive. This is what it is to exercise faith, or to live by faith, and that is why we know Abraham as the father of faith.

10. How long does it take for faith to work?

“And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” (Matthew 8:2-3)

NOTE: Faith works immediately. As soon as you accept and live according to that Word which was spoken by God, then that Word will give the power. When God speaks a Word for a specific time in the future that Word will immediately fulfil itself at the very moment when the time has come.

“And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another

steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.” (John 5:5-9)

NOTE: Once again, faith works immediately. This sick man might have said, “Lord, if You will make me whole, I will obey Your Word.” But no! He believed Christ’s Word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once. He made the effort to walk, and he did walk. The impossible became possible, because he acted on the Word of God, and God gave the power. This is what it means to live by faith. When we act on the Word of God because we understand that His Word is creative, then we allow that Word to do its work in us and the power is given to fulfil that Word. Do not wait to see something first, or feel something first, but act on the Word and believe that the Word will be true, not because you feel it or see it, but simply because God has spoken it.



11. Does the Bible record other people doing the impossible through living by faith?

“And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.” (Matthew 14:26-29)

NOTE: It is impossible for man to walk on water, but God’s Word made it possible for Peter when he believed the Word and obeyed the Word. Peter

understood that God's Word has creative power and he lived according to that understanding. He did not wait for a sign or a feeling, but he obeyed simply because Christ spoke the Word and when he placed his feet on the water, the Word of God gave him the power to walk on water in order to fulfil the Word that was spoken by Jesus, "Come".

"And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine...His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it... Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew)"

(John 2:2-9)

NOTE: It was because they obeyed every Word that Christ spoke that these people saw the creative power of Christ. If they didn't live according to every Word that He told them then and there, they would not have seen the miracle. But they obeyed Him, not because they saw something or felt something, but they relied on His Word only. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive it, and it is ours.

Summary

Faith is understanding that God's Word is always true, because His Word has creative power. But understanding the power of God's Word will not give you power, just like holding a bread in your hand will not fill you. God desires that we will choose to allow His Word to enter our lives and thus live according to every Word that proceeds from His mouth. We do not need a sign or a feeling to act on God's Word, but we act on His Word because we know that He will supply the power because His Word is always true. Confidence in the divine Word will lead to

a doing of that Word. And when we act on God's Word, His Word will provide the power to fulfil the Word spoken and we will see His creative power.

Your Response

Is it your desire to live by faith, to live by every Word that proceeds from God's mouth, and so experience the creative power of His Word?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 4

Great Faith and Little Faith

In a previous lesson, entitled “Chapter 2 – What is Faith?”, we learnt that faith is understanding that God’s Word is always true because God’s Word has creative power to make itself true. In the lesson entitled “Chapter 3 – Living by Faith”, it was made clear that God wants His people to exercise faith, that is, He wants His people to live according to the understanding that His Word is always true. Having bread in your hand will not fill you if you don’t eat it. Understanding God’s Word will not change you if you do not apply it. If it is by faith that we allow God’s Word to fulfil itself in our life, and if it is through faith that we please Him, then it is very important for us to evaluate our faith.



1. What does great faith look like?

“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she

said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” (Matthew 15:22-28)

NOTE: Jesus said that this lady, who was not an Israelite, but a Canaanite, had great faith. There are only two people recorded in the Bible who had great faith. She believed in the creative power of God's Word. There are also three other characteristics that this lady had:

(1) She was asking something for someone else – her daughter. She also had needs in her own life, but she asked Jesus to fulfil the need of someone else instead of asking something for herself.

(2) She was determined to get help from Jesus. She cried unto Jesus. Even after the disciples asked Jesus to send her away and Jesus made it clear that He had a special work to do for the Israelites, she still continued crying to Jesus for help. Jesus made it clear that He had special bread (His Word) that needed to be given to the children (Israelites) and not to the dogs (other nations). But this lady was willing to be called a dog as long as she could get help from the Words of Jesus that others did not want to accept.

(3) She did not feel worthy. She cried unto Jesus to have mercy on her. What is mercy? Mercy is treating someone better than they deserve. She wanted Jesus to treat her better than she deserves and she was willing to be called a dog in order to get help from Jesus.

2. Who else in the Bible had great faith according to Jesus?

“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and

to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” (Matthew 8:5-10)



NOTE: Jesus said that this centurion, who was also not an Israelite, but a Roman, had great faith. He believed in the creative power of God’s Word to fulfil itself.

There are three other characteristics that this centurion had:

- (1) He was asking something for someone else – his servant. He also had needs in his own life, but he asked Jesus to fulfill the need of someone else instead of asking something for himself.
- (2) He was determined to get help from Jesus. He beseeched Jesus to help his servant. Even though he was a Roman leader and Jesus was a Jew, he did not care what the people around him would think or do. He was determined to get help from Jesus no matter what happened around him or what people might have said.
- (3) He did not feel worthy. He did not feel that he deserved help from Jesus, or that Jesus owed him anything. When Jesus healed the servant, the centurion saw it as an undeserved gift.

3. What does little faith look like?

“And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down

out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (Matthew 14:25-31)

NOTE: Jesus said that Peter, who was an Israelite, had little faith. There are three characteristics that Peter had:

(1) He was asking something for himself. He did not ask Jesus to help someone else walk on water.

(2) He does not seem to feel unworthy. Instead, he questions the identity of Jesus and tells Him what to do, “Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.”

(3) Unlike the centurion and Canaanite woman who was determined to get help from Jesus no matter what happened around them, Peter started to doubt Jesus’ Word when he started to focus on self, the wind and waves.

4. Does little faith believe that God’s Word has creative power to fulfil itself?

“Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.” (Matthew 14:28)

NOTE: Yes! Little faith does believe in God’s power. Peter believed that if Jesus told him to walk on the water then he would be able to do it. Just because we believe in God’s power doesn’t mean that we have great faith!

5. Is little faith enough to walk on water?

“And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.” (Matthew 14:29-30)

NOTE: Little faith is enough to walk on water sometimes. Little faith trusts God's Word, but when focused on self or problems around, little faith starts to doubt God's Word. Peter walked on water when he trusted God's Word, but when he focused on self, and the wind, he started to doubt and God's Word could no longer be fulfilled for Him. Little faith is not a nice life because it is an up and down experience. Many Christians are like Peter: the one moment they are walking on water with Jesus, and the next they are busy drowning. Great faith, like that of the Canaanite woman, is a more constant walk with Jesus, because it trusts God's Word all of the time and does not focus on self or unfavorable conditions.

6. Who else had little faith according to Jesus?

“And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?”
(Matthew 16:5-10)

NOTE: This time around it was all of the disciples that had little faith. Jesus tried to change the conversation to something spiritual. He tried to preach to them, but the disciples took the conversation back to literal bread. Little faith finds it hard to listen to something spiritual when there is a physical need. Also, the disciples didn't have bread because they forgot to take bread. Little faith doesn't have what it needs today, not because God did not provide, but because little faith forgot to take what God already provided. Jesus already fed the 5,000 with 5 loaves, and He fed the 4,000 with seven loaves, but the disciples were worrying about where they would find bread. Little faith easily forgets about how God's Word was fulfilled in the past. Without sharing testimonies about how God's

Word has been fulfilled, or writing them down, it is easy to forget God's miracles like they never even happened.

7. What else does little faith worry about?

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Matthew 6:25-30)



NOTE: Little faith understands the power in God's Word, but it worries about survival, food and clothing, even after understanding that God takes care of those who are faithful to Him. Problems and challenges distract little faith from the promises of God's Word.

8. Why did Jesus ask His disciples where their faith was?

“Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to



him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.” (Luke 8:22-25)

NOTE: Jesus said “Let us go over unto the other side of the lake.” As long as they exercised faith in that Word, it would be fulfilled. But when they saw the storm of wind on the lake they started to doubt. Jesus asked them where their faith was, because they doubted His Word and focused on the problem. He rebuked the wind and raging water, and this confirmed that there is creative power in His Word.

9. What will Jesus look for when He returns?

“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)

NOTE: While many people are struggling to keep walking on water because they exercise little faith, there are those who have never even walked on water at all because they exercise no faith. The Son of Man is looking for people who live by faith all of the time, and can therefore walk on water with Jesus all of the time.

10. What did the apostles ask Jesus?

“And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” (Luke 17:5)

NOTE: The disciples must have felt embarrassed that they, as Israelites, only exercised little faith while the Roman centurion and Canaanite woman exercised great faith according to Jesus. The disciples had been enjoying greater light than the others. But the disciples did not give up. They had seen for themselves that little faith is not a nice life. They wanted great faith and that is why they asked Jesus to increase their faith.

Summary

Faith is understanding that God’s Word is always true, because His Word has creative power. God wants us to live according to this understanding.

This is what we have learnt from **little faith**:

1. Little faith lives according to God’s Word sometimes. Little faith often doubts God’s Word and focuses on self or problems.
2. It often feels like it deserves help from Jesus. It thinks, “I have done this for God, so God needs to do this for me.”

This is what we have learnt from **great faith**:

1. Great faith lives according to every Word that proceeds out of God’s mouth all of the time. When circumstances change, it keeps on trusting God’s Word.
2. Great faith does not feel worthy to be helped. It sees everything from God as undeserved gifts.

The disciples had lots of truth, but little faith. The Roman centurion and Canaanite woman had little truth, but great faith. This shows us that our standing before

God depends not upon the amount of truth we have received, but upon the use we make of the truth that we have. Thus those who follow the little truth that they have are in a better condition than those who have great truth, but do not live according to that truth in their daily life. The word “faithful” means “full of faith”. Those who constantly live according to all the truth that they have are called faithful and have a great faith. This is a great life. Those whose Christian experience is not constant have little faith. This is not a nice life. God desires that we have great faith and remain faithful.

Your Response

Evaluate your faith today whether you have great faith, where you constantly live according to God’s Word, or little faith, where you only sometimes live according to God’s Word. Is it your desire, like the disciples, to have more faith?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 5

Growing Your Faith

In a previous lesson entitled “Chapter 2 – What is Faith?” we learnt that to understand what faith is, is to understand that God’s Word is creative in nature and therefore always true. In “Chapter 3 – Living by Faith” we learnt that teaching people to live by faith is teaching them to live according to the understanding of what faith is: expecting the Word of God to do what it says and to depend upon the Word to do the thing which is by it spoken.

In “Chapter 4 – Great Faith and Little Faith” we learnt that little faith lives by faith sometimes, but not all of the time. Little faith is not a pleasant life. Great faith lives by faith all of the time and it is a pleasant life.

In this lesson “Chapter 5 – Growing Your Faith” we will look at how to cultivate faith. The cultivating of faith is by practice to cause to grow confidence in the power of God’s Word to fulfil itself and dependence upon that Word to fulfil itself. When we cultivate our faith it will grow from little faith to great faith.



1. What prevents the exercising of great faith?

“And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”

(Matthew 14:31)

NOTE: It is impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2). When little faith doubts God's Word, it means that little faith believes that it is possible for God to lie. But God cannot lie because His Word is creative. Therefore, when little faith doubts God's Word it is actually doubting God's power. Great faith does not doubt, but depends on God's Word always.



2. What did the apostles ask Jesus to do?

“And the apostles said unto the Lord,

Increase our faith.” (Luke 17:5)

NOTE: Jesus told His disciples about their little faith (Matthew 8:26) and therefore it makes sense to ask Him to increase their faith. They had little faith and depended on God's Word sometimes, but not all of the time. They wanted great faith so that they would depend on God's Word all of the time. To cultivate dependence on God's Word to fulfill itself is to cultivate faith.

3. How did Jesus teach them to increase their faith?

“And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” (Luke 17:6)

NOTE: Many people misunderstand these words of Jesus. He did not say “faith as much as a grain of mustard seed”, but He said “faith as a grain of mustard seed”. God's enemy, Satan, is trying to deceive people by making them think that they should be happy with little faith. But Jesus did not teach here that we should have faith as small as a mustard seed. Jesus knew that the mustard seed starts out small, but ends up as a big tree – it has the quality of being the most growing. Jesus was teaching His disciples how to grow little faith into great faith. Though the mustard seed is so small, it still contains the same life principle that produces growth in the biggest tree. When the mustard seed is in the ground, it takes hold of every element that God has provided and it quickly develops a strong and healthy growth. Jesus wants us to have faith like a mustard seed: A faith that takes hold upon God's Word, and upon all the helpful agencies He has appointed. This is how we should increase our faith.

4. What else, according to Jesus, is important to understand when growing your faith?

“But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:7-10)

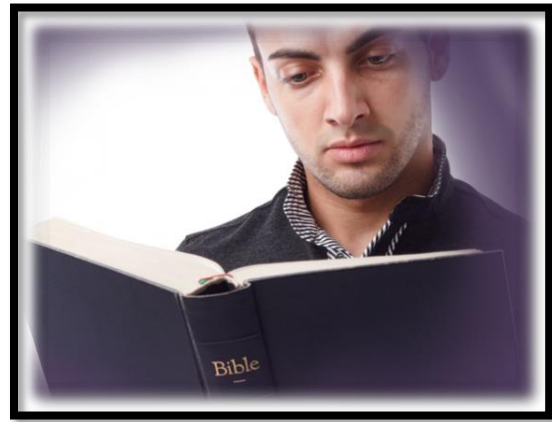
NOTE: It is important to understand that God does not owe us anything. But we owe God everything. We belong to Him by creation (Genesis 1:27) and also by redemption (1 Corinthians 6:20). If we did everything perfectly which He has commanded us to do, then we have only done our part which is expected of us. We cannot do more than what is expected of us and gain merit. We should not say “Lord, I have done this for You, so You need to do this for me.” Everything that God does for us is because of His grace and mercy – treating us better than we deserve and giving us gifts that we do not deserve.

5. How can we be sure that we are acting in faith?

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”
(Psalm 119:105)

“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
(Romans 10:17)

NOTE: Faith is completely depending upon God's Word only for the accomplishment of what that Word says. And so we should never forget that where there is no Word of God, there cannot be any faith. Romans 10:17 makes it clear that faith comes by the very Word of God itself, and then where there is no Word of God, there can be no faith. If we want to grow our faith by constantly living by faith, then it is



important to make sure that we walk only in the light that shines from God's Word. Only God's Word is worthy of faith, and can be depended on. By exercising faith in His Word your faith will grow as you see His promises being fulfilled.

6. How can God's past dealings in my life help me to grow confidence in His Word?

"Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid." (Deuteronomy 7:18-19)

"I will remember the works of the LORD" (Psalm 77:11)

NOTE: Remembering how God's Word fulfilled itself in the past gives us confidence that His Word will fulfil itself again in the future. When we have seen something before, then it gives us confidence that it can happen again. We have nothing to fear for the future, except if we forget how faithful God's Word has been in the past. Writing down and sharing the faithfulness of God's Word are great ways to remember His power.

7. How can someone else help me to grow confidence in the faithfulness of God's Word?

“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.”

(John 4:39)

NOTE: Listening to testimonies about how God's Word has fulfilled itself in the life of others will help you to grow confidence in His Word. God's Word can do in your life what it has done in the lives of others. Those who talk about confidence in God's Word can encourage you to exercise more confidence in His Word. Those who doubt God's Word can discourage you to exercise more confidence in His Word. If you choose to associate with people who encourage doubt, and not confidence, in God's Word then it will have a negative impact on your faith (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11).

8. What if I stumble and fall along the way?

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (Romans 13:14)

“For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again” (Proverbs 24:16)

NOTE: Don't plan to fail, but if you do fail, get up. When Peter doubted and started to sink, he cried out to the Lord to save him.

9. How fast can faith grow?

“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly” (2 Thessalonians 1:3)

NOTE: There is nothing known to man that will grow so fast as faith, when it is cultivated.

Summary

Doubt and unbelief stop us from exercising great faith. To increase our dependence on the power of God's Word, and thus decrease doubt and unbelief, is to increase our faith. Here are some practical ways from this lesson on how to increase our dependence on the power of God's Word to fulfil itself:

1. Like the mustard seed takes hold of all the different elements that God has provided for it to grow, so we should take hold of God's Word and the different agencies that He has given us to grow. We should make sure that everything we do is based on the Word of God. As we exercise faith in His Word, His Word will be fulfilled and we will see His miracles. If God's Word is the source of our power, then there is no reason to doubt, but relying on something else for power leaves much reason to doubt.
2. We should understand that God owes us nothing, and we owe Him everything. If we have done everything that He has commanded us to do, then we have only done our part. We cannot do more than what is expected of us. Thus everything that we receive from God is not because we deserve it, but because He treats us better than we deserve and gives us gifts that we do not deserve.
3. Remembering how God's Word fulfilled itself in the past gives us confidence that God's Word will fulfil itself again. When we forget God's miracles in the past, it then becomes easy for us to doubt. Sharing God's miracles in our lives with others is a great way to remember them.
4. Surrounding ourselves with people who encourage us to exercise faith and not doubt is also a great way to increase our dependence on God's Word. When we listen to testimonies of what God's Word has done for other people, we become encouraged that His Word can do the same for us.
5. In our walk with God we should not plan to fail. But if we do fail, then we should stand up again and recommit our faithfulness to God's Word.

Your Response

Is it your desire to increase your faith by starting to depend on God's Word more, and to doubt His Word less?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 6

In God's Image



Have you ever seen a vegetable garden? Perhaps you have your own. When a farmer plants tomato plants, what fruit does he expect from that plant? Tomatoes, of course! If the farmer wanted mangoes, then he would have planted some mango trees. It is part of the tomato

plant's purpose to bring forth tomatoes. If it doesn't fulfil this purpose, then it becomes rather useless. There are many companies around the world that produce home appliances. A company that makes fridges designs it in such a way that it will keep food cool when placed inside the fridge. Now if a fridge does not keep the food cool, or instead heats it up, who would want to buy that fridge? If a fridge does not fulfil its purpose, then it becomes rather useless.

1. What is the main purpose for the existence of humans?

“every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. (Isaiah 43:7)

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27)

NOTE: Humans were not created to glorify themselves, but to glorify God only. Humans were not created to make themselves known, but to make God known. God's nature and His law is love (1 John 4:8) and it is the purpose of humanity to reveal God's character to the universe. Ecclesiastes 12:13 also teach us that the whole duty of man is to glorify God by living according to His Word.



2. Did God tell the first humans how to live, and how to die?

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17)

NOTE: The Word of God was to be the life and guide of humanity. God told them the way that they should walk and live, and He also told them the way that they should not walk and die. God taught them that the only way to have life is by faith. What is faith? In a previous lesson, “Chapter 2 – What is Faith?”, we learnt that faith is understanding that God's Word is always true because it has creative power. As long as humanity lived by faith in God's Word, they would glorify God. As long as humanity had faith in God's Word not to eat from the tree, they would have life. God would be known through them, because the image of God would be seen reflected in them.

3. When does God dwell in humans?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you” (John 15:7)

NOTE: When God made the first humans in the garden, He dwelt in them and was manifest in them through His Word. As long as they lived by faith in His Word they reflected His character and had the mind of God. Whatever God told them to do, they did it. And whatever He told them not to do, they didn't do it. This resulted in the whole universe seeing God's character manifested in humanity.



4. How does the relationship between a husband and a wife illustrate this relationship between God and humanity?

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:22-25)

NOTE: The Bible teaches us that the husband is the head of the home, and Christ is the head of the church (also called His wife in Revelation 19:7). When the home needs to make a decision, the final decision will be made by the husband. He will make this decision in love and for the best interest of his home and he will also take responsibility for that decision. For this reason, the wife should willingly subject herself to her husband. The Bible also teaches this principle in 1 Peter 3:1. Christ is also the head of the church and therefore the church needs to willingly subject itself to God's Word.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24)

NOTE: When the husband is the head of the home and the wife is in willing subjection, then they truly will be one. Even though they are still two personalities, they will become one in mind and purpose. The home will be

united. When the wife chooses not to subject herself to her husband, then the home is no longer united and the purposes of the home will be divided. As the wife is willingly subjecting herself to her husband, she is the glory of her husband (1 Corinthians 11:7). In the same way humanity would reflect God's glory as long as humanity willingly subjected themselves to God's Word. Does this take away freedom? No! Only willing subjection will do. In John 17:21 Jesus wants us to be one with God. Just as the husband and wife can be united in mind and purpose by willing subjection on the part of the wife, so God and humanity can be united in mind and purpose by willing subjection on the part of humanity.

5. What if Adam and Eve, the first humans, decided to follow the word of another?

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey” (Romans 6:16)

NOTE: Adam and Eve had to willingly subject themselves to God's Word if they were to reflect His glory and fulfill their purpose of existence. If they would separate themselves from God, then God could no longer be made known through them and God's image would not be reflected. And if they didn't follow God's Word, no longer reflecting God's image, then according to Romans 6:16 somebody would still be reflected in them. Somebody would still be manifested and glorified in them. Who would this be? That would depend on whose word was being followed.

“for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23)

NOTE: Remember that faith is understanding that God's Word is always true because it has creative power. Not someone else's word, but God's Word only. The moment when Adam and Eve would choose to follow the word of another, they would no longer live by faith. Where there is no Word of God, there cannot be any faith. They would no longer reflect God's glory, but the glory of another. And thus it becomes easy to understand that living by faith is the only way to glorify God and reflect His character. The only way to fulfill the purpose for our existence is to live by faith. When we doubt God's Word, we cannot fulfill the purpose of our existence. And thus it also becomes easy to understand what sin actually is: Whenever God says something, and we do not live according to that Word, then we live in sin. Romans 6:23 makes it clear that the result of sin can

only be death, because there is no reason for something to exist that does not fulfill its purpose. Living by faith is living by every Word that proceeds out of God's mouth.

6. How was humanity separated from God?

“And the snake said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:4-5)

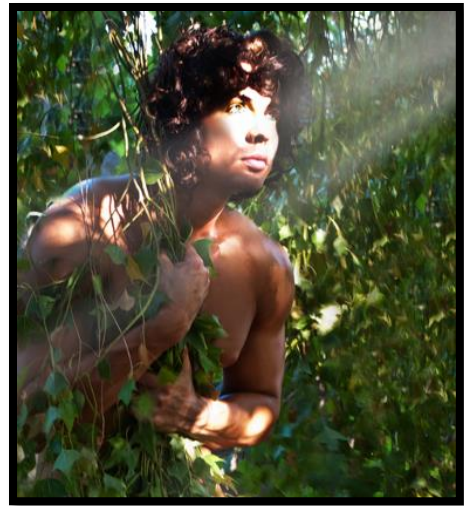


NOTE: If Eve in her own head should turn away from the Word of God and follow her own word, then it would be only herself that would be reflected and glorified. But this was not so. Eve did not follow her own word, nor the word of God, and so she glorified and reflected the image of the one whose word she obeyed. Genesis 3:4-5 makes it clear that it was Satan's word that was believed, and followed, above God's Word, and this meant that Satan's mind was accepted and followed instead of God's mind. It was not God who was manifested in Adam and Eve when they sinned, and not themselves also. It was Satan's image that was reflected in Adam and Eve after they sinned. They had to make a choice between believing God's Word, or Satan's word. It was all a matter of faith.

7. What happened to the human mind after sin entered our world?

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God” (Romans 8:7)

NOTE: Now Adam and Eve had the mind of God's enemy, Satan, which is enmity against God. Adam and Eve could only give to their children what they had: the sinful mind of Satan. Adam's children from birth also reflected this sinful mind of Satan, and not the character of God. "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image" (Genesis 5:3).



8. After sinning, how did Adam and Eve respond to God?

"And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." (Genesis 3:10)

NOTE: Adam was hiding from God. Selfishness took the place of love in his heart. Before sin, Adam held joyful communion with God, but after sin he could find no joy in God's holiness. Adam and Eve were no longer happy in God's presence. Adam and Eve now had a mind that wanted to glorify Satan and follow Satan's word. Adam and Eve were no longer fulfilling their purpose for existence and deserved to pay the wages of sin - death.

9. Why didn't God immediately kill Adam and Eve?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)

NOTE: The greatest plan that the universe had ever seen was set into motion – the plan of salvation. It is God's plan to save humanity from the power, guilt and wages of sin. 1 Peter 1:12 tells us that God's plan to restore God's image in man is so great that "the angels desire to look into" this awesome plan.

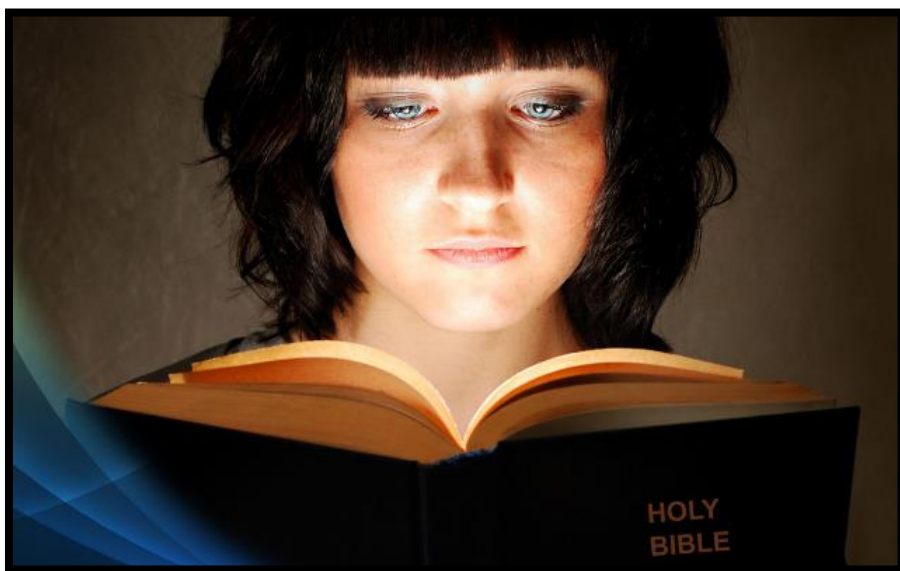
Summary

Living by faith is living according to the understanding that God's Word is always true, because His Word has creative power. Living by faith is what enables us to fulfil our purpose of glorifying God and reflecting His character of love to the universe. When we submit ourselves to God's Word, then we are one in mind and purpose with Him. When you choose to follow someone's word, then you are reflecting the character of that person. When we do not live by faith in God's Word, but live according to the word of another, then we sin and we are no longer fulfilling the purpose for our existence. Sin is simply disobedience to God's Word or law (1 John 3:4). Those who do not live by faith in God's Word no longer have a purpose for existence and will die (Romans 6:23). Adam and Eve sinned by believing the word of Satan and therefore reflected Satan's mind and character. They were no longer happy in God's presence. God set into motion the greatest plan that the universe has ever seen to rescue us and restore God's image in us.

Your Response

Is it your desire to willingly subject yourself to God's Word and live by faith so that you can glorify God, reflect His image and so be one with Him in mind and purpose?

Answer: _____



CHAPTER 7

The Power of Sin



Jesus said, “my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). This must be true, because in a previous lesson, “Chapter 2 – What is Faith”, we learnt that it is impossible for God to lie because His Word has creative power. Many people who are Christians do not find Christ’s yoke easy nor His burden light. They find it is difficult to obey God’s commandments and there is no joy in living a Christian life. And

the reason for this is that they do not make the right calculation as to the enemy that needs to be overcome. Jesus said, “what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace” (Luke 14:31-32). In order to overcome an enemy, it is necessary to know the power of the enemy and also the power that is needed to successfully overcome the enemy.

1. What is the enemy that Christians face?

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psalm 51:5)

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”
(Romans 3:23)

NOTE: David makes it clear that we are born with a sinful human nature. What does this mean? In the previous lesson, “Chapter 6 – In His Image”, we learnt that Adam and Eve sinned by obeying the word of another, rather than obeying the Word of God.

Because of this decision, Adam and Eve were no longer reflecting God’s glory, but were reflecting the glory of Satan. Selfishness took the place of love in their hearts. They

became one in mind and purpose with Satan. They no longer found joy in God’s presence. When they had children, they could only give to their children what they had, and so their children were born with a mind that wanted to glorify Satan (Genesis 5:3). This does not mean that we are born with sin on our account, but it means that we are born with a mind that wants to glorify Satan and finds delight in sin. As soon as we start making decisions, we will choose sin. Our purpose is to reflect God’s glory by following His Word. Romans 3:23 makes it clear that it is sin that is keeping us from reflecting God’s glory and therefore it is sin that is the enemy.



2. What does the Bible teach about the heart at birth?

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

NOTE: The world’s advice to follow your heart is not good advice at all. Our hearts are wicked according to God. We are born with a sinful human nature that delights in sin. And the problem is not so much with people acknowledging that they have done wrong. Many will admit that they have done wrong and that their heart and mind want to do what is wrong. The problem, however, lies in failing to acknowledge the power of sin – the power of their mind to follow sin. They think that they could do better if only circumstances were better: better family, better church members, etc. But it is not anything outside of us that hinders us from being Christians, it is the power of sin working in the heart that hinders us from being Christians.

3. Can we change our hearts?

“Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one” (Job 14:4)

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (Jeremiah 13:23)

NOTE: Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. If a leopard can change his spots, then we can change our hearts from evil to good. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper



place, but here they are powerless. We can produce an outward correctness of behaviour, but it will never come from the heart and therefore cannot bring joy. It is completely possible to have an outward correctness of behaviour for selfish reasons. We cannot purify the heart - the spring of life. When the sinful heart tries to follow God's Word, it will always fail. It might try again, and it will fail again. And because it fails so much, it will begin to excuse sin and apologize for it and try to find peace in that experience.

4. How does Paul explain the power of sin?

“That as sin hath reigned unto death” (Romans 5:21)

NOTE: To reign is "to hold and exercise sovereign power;" "to exercise commanding influence; to dominate; to exercise control over; control as by right or superior force;" "to prevail irresistibly; exist widely or to the exclusion of something else. That is what the Word of God, that cannot lie, says that sin does in humans and with humans. Until that fact is recognized, nobody can be delivered from the power of sin. Until the problem is recognized and confessed, nobody will look for a solution.

5. To what does Paul compare the power of sin?

“I am carnal, sold under sin” (Romans 7:14)

NOTE: Paul takes this figure from the Roman system of slavery. In these times a man who was sold was a slave, and was in all things absolutely subject to his master. The master had absolute power in all things, even to life or death, over the slave. The owner could torture his slave to death or kill him out of hand, and no one could question it. The government confirmed the owner in the absolute possession and control of the one whom he had bought with his money. Thus the Bible makes it clear that we are slaves of sin.



6. What did Jesus teach regarding the power of sin?

“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” (John 8:34)

NOTE: The Greek word for “servant” is “doulos”, and signifies “properly, a born bondman, or slave.” It is not simply one made a slave, but one born a slave. Jesus is teaching us that we are born as slaves of sin. Sin has absolute power and control in all things over those who are its slaves. Jesus made it clear in Matthew 7:18 that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. It is just as impossible for a slave of sin to do a good deed as it is for a thorn bush to bring forth grapes. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, “No man can serve two masters.” Jesus does not say that man *will* not or *shall* not serve two masters, but that he *cannot*. When our mind belongs to God, He gives us the freedom of choice. But when our mind is captured by Satan, he has absolute power and does not give us the freedom to choose whether we will submit to him or not.

7. What is the experience of a slave of sin?

“For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Romans 7:15, 18-19)

NOTE: Why is it that a man does the evil that he hates? Why is it that he does not the good that he would? Why is it that he cannot perform the good that he wants?

“it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Romans 7:20)



NOTE: The slave of sin might not want to disobey God’s voice, but sin that dwells in the slave causes the slave to be disobedient. Even when the slave wants to do good, the sin that dwells in the slave holds the slave back, and will not let the slave do good. God’s Word makes it clear that sin has absolute, supreme power in our mind. The carnal mind “is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). That is why many find it difficult to obey God’s commandments and there is no joy in their Christian life. This is also why many people of major world religions agree with what their religious teachers teach them, and want to follow it, but the heart still wants to do what is wrong. The heart is still evil and they are still slaves to the bad habits in their lives.

8. Does the sinful human enjoy listening to God’s Word?

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14)

9. Is there deliverance from this absolute slavery?

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 7:24-25)

NOTE: God’s Word says that there is deliverance as sure as there is slavery.



Summary

All of us are born as helpless slaves of sin that do not reflect God’s glory. It is impossible for us to change our hearts. Why? Sin has supreme, sovereign, and absolute power over our lives. Oh, if people would only recognize that it doesn’t matter how hard you try, you can never stop yourself from sinning and start obeying God’s Word. There is guaranteed failure for those who try to overcome sin in their own power. It is not anything outside of us nor around us that can hinder us from being Christians, but only sin in us. Until we recognize and confess the power of sin as the Word of God declares it, we cannot know the power of God as the Word of God presents it. Until we acknowledge the complete sovereignty of the power of sin, we cannot acknowledge the complete sovereignty of the power of God. All those who recognize and confess the absolute power of sin in their lives and their utter powerlessness to overcome it, they can be delivered from the slavery of sin. For there is deliverance from this power. There is deliverance as complete as is the captivity, and there is freedom as absolute as is the slavery.

Your Response

Are you willing to recognize and confess that we are all born as completely helpless slaves of sin, and that sin has a supreme, sovereign, and absolute power over our lives that is impossible to be resisted through our own power?

Answer: _____

CHAPTER 8

Free from Sin

There are a couple of things that are claimed to be impossible for us to perform. It has been said that it is impossible to tickle yourself. It has also been said that it is impossible to move your leg in a clockwise circle and simultaneously draw a “6.” And it is also impossible to completely close your nose and say “Mmmmmm” at the same time for longer than 15seconds. After a couple of attempts, these might become possible. But in the previous lesson, entitled “Chapter 7 – The Power of Sin”, we learnt that we are born as slaves to sin and therefore all that we ever can do is sin. There might be outward obedience, but never obedience from the heart. It is impossible for us to change our hearts. No matter how much we try, a slave of sin can never obey the Word of God. The good news is that the Bible teaches us that there is salvation from the slavery of sin (Romans 5:21).



1. Why are Jesus' miracles recorded in the Bible?

“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

(John 20:31)

2. What was the main lesson Jesus taught through His miracles?

“But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.” (Mark 2:10-11)

NOTE: Jesus healed people of their diseases and did many miracles when people exercised faith in the creative power of His Word. Jesus helped them in the things which they could see, and so inspired them to have confidence in His Word regarding things which they could not see – leading them to believe in His power to forgive sins. When Jesus forgives our sins, then we have life through His name.

3. What was Jesus’ mission?

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21)

NOTE: Jesus came to save people from their sins and free His people from the bondage of sin. From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we can learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. When Christ commanded the paralytic to walk, the paralytic could have waited for a sign or a feeling. But no, the paralytic believed the Word of Christ, believed that he was healed, and he made the effort at once. He willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the Word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole. We might be able to walk, but there is a problem that all of humanity has in common at birth: We are all born as slaves to sin. We cannot take away our past sins, we cannot change our hearts and we cannot follow God’s Word. But Christ healed the paralytic in order to teach us how He will save us from the bondage of sin.

4. How does Jesus want to save us from the slavery of sin?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3)

NOTE: We are born into this world as slaves to sin. Christ says when we are born again we will be part of His kingdom. Only those who are free from sin will enter His kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:9). Thus it becomes easy to understand that those who are born again are free from sin. They do not serve sin.

5. What will we receive when we are born again?

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)



NOTE: When we are born again we will receive a new heart. God makes it clear that this heart will cause us to obey the Word of the Lord. We will be free from sin and we will be able to do what is right.

“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

(Romans 5:20-21)

NOTE: We will receive a heart where grace reigns, and not sin. Grace will abound even more than sin, because there is much more power in grace than there is in sin. Since grace comes from God and sin comes from Satan, it becomes easy to understand that grace has much more power over sin just as God has much more power over Satan. In the previous lesson, “Chapter 7 – The Power of Sin”, we learnt that there is power in sin to reign over man, and hold him under its dominion. And just as certainly is there power in grace to reign over sin, and hold man under the dominion of grace against all the power of sin. If the reign of sin was absolute, then the reign of grace will be absolute also. And that is why it is necessary to first understand the absolute power of sin, so that we can then

understand the absolute power of grace. To all that are born again, God promises to provide a new heart that will be free from sin, and will serve righteousness only, as before they were free from righteousness and served sin only. Where sin gave no freedom, God gives freedom. And thus righteousness will only reign as long as we submit ourselves to God's Word and live by every Word that proceeds out of God's mouth.

6. How can we receive this new life from God?

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:23)

NOTE: In the same way that the blind man received sight from Jesus, we will receive a new heart from God. Just as God's Word told the paralytic to walk, so God's Word has promised to give a new heart. If we believe the promise – believe that He will give us a new heart that is free from sin – God supplies the fact. We will receive the new heart, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it. This is what we learnt in lessons “Chapter 2 – What is Faith?” and “Chapter 3 – Living by Faith”. By exercising faith in God's Word, He will create in us a new heart. We should not wait to feel or see that we have this new heart, but say, “I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.”

7. What is the Word that we need to believe if we want this new heart?

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” (Romans 5:8-10)

NOTE: The only way for us to be free from the slavery of sin, is to die. Christ, however, wants us alive. And so in the greatest demonstration of love that the universe has ever seen, the Creator offered up His life for the creature. To all those who accept this sacrifice, His blood redeems from sin. Those who accept this sacrifice therefore no longer belong to sin, but they belong to Christ. This is why Christ can forgive sin. What is the meaning of forgive? The word “forgive” is composed of “for” and “give,” or “give for”. To forgive is simply to give for. Christ can forgive sin, because He gave for sin. What did Christ give for sin? He gave His righteous life for sin. When Christ forgives, He gives righteousness for sin. Those who accept Christ’s death in their place experience forgiveness. Christ takes our sinful life, which He died for, and He gives us His righteous life in return. That is why the Bible teaches the following:



“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

NOTE: It does not say, “I want to be crucified with Christ.” It does not say, “I wish I were crucified with Christ, that He might live in me.” It does say, “I am crucified with Christ.” And now it is Christ that will live in us when we live by every Word that proceeds out of God’s mouth. In a previous lesson, “Chapter 5 – In His Image”, we saw that living by faith in God’s Word will reflect God’s character in us. This is the purpose of our existence.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

(Romans 6:3-4, 6)

NOTE: Those who exercise faith in this Word will no longer sin, because they are dead to sin (Romans 6:11). They cannot live in something that they are dead to, but will reflect the character of Christ, because they are alive to righteousness. As long as faith is exercised in God’s Word, Christ lives in us. Christ’s life and death thus not only gives pardon for the past, but it also gives power for the future. Christ’s thus dwells in His people through the exceedingly great and precious promises in His Word and His people become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)

8. What happens when a person accepts and believes this promise from God?

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

NOTE: God’s Word has creative power. God’s creative Word creates a new creature. The things that they hated, they now will love. The things that they loved, they will now hate. That is why the gospel is the power of God (Romans 1:16). Psalm 33:9, “For he spake, and it was done.” Thus it was in creation. And thus it was in redemption. Just as God created the whole world from nothing, so He creates righteousness in a person where there is no righteousness at all. And so He is the same yesterday and today and forever. Always He is the Creator. And always He does all things by His Word only. And always He can do all things by His Word, because it is the very characteristic of the Word of God that it possesses creative power to fulfil itself.

Summary

All of us are born as helpless slaves of sin that do not reflect God's glory. It is impossible for us to change our hearts. Why? Sin has supreme, sovereign, and absolute power over our lives. God can save us from the absolute power of sin. Christ came to teach us that, through His creative Word, He can replace the



absolute power of sin with the absolute power of grace. Christ taught that the gift which God promises us, we must believe that we do receive it, and it is ours. It is not so because we feel it or see it, but because God promised it. God has promised to give us a new heart that will obey His Word. Just as God created the world from nothing, so God will create a new heart in us: by His Word. When we accept Christ's sacrifice for us, then our sinful hearts are crucified with Christ, and Christ lives His righteous life in us by faith in His Word. It will be just as easy to do right under the reign of grace, as it was to do wrong under the reign of sin. The same power is used in both creation and redemption: God's creative Word.

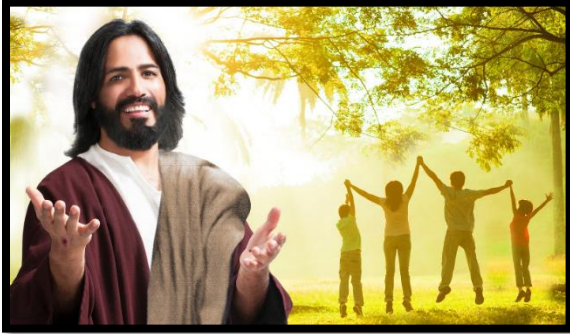
Your Response

Are you willing to accept Christ's death for you, and exercise faith in His Word so that He can live His righteous life in you?

Answer: _____

CHAPTER 9

Victory over Sin



In the previous lesson, entitled “Chapter 8 – Free from Sin”, it was made clear how exercising faith in Christ’s life, death and resurrection can set us free from the slavery of sin that was mentioned in the lesson entitled “Chapter 7 – The Power of Sin”. Unfortunately, many professed

Christians have excused sin, as though it cannot be prevented from the life of a Christian. They claim that even after accepting Christ, it is impossible to obey all of God’s commandments. They believe that God doesn’t even expect them to fulfil His law completely. To them victory-defeat, victory-defeat is the approved lifestyle of normal Christianity. This is based on a false understanding of righteousness by faith and is actually (un)righteousness by works. Let us look at what the Bible has to say about the Christian experience of a born-again believer.

1. Will those who continue sinning inherit God’s kingdom?

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived” (1 Corinthians 6:9)

NOTE: The requirements of God make it utterly impossible for sin or disobedience to be a part of the Christian lifestyle. From Adam’s time the battle has been about exercising faith in God’s Word. If Satan had to leave heaven because of sin, and Adam had to leave the garden of Eden because of sin, then what makes us think that we are part of God’s kingdom while we continue sinning? “Be not deceived”

2. Who will inherit God's kingdom?

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” (Revelation 21:7)

NOTE: A born-again believer will obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. God is holy, and none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence. He created us to be like Him (Genesis 1:26-27), and if we do not fulfil our purpose then we will not be with Him. If we do not gain the victory over sin, then sin is gaining the victory over us.



3. Are there any temptations that we cannot overcome?

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

NOTE: We have absolutely no excuse for sinning. God does not allow us to be tempted above what we can bare, and He also gives the power to overcome the temptation.

4. How do we overcome temptation?

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:4)

NOTE: We become partakers of the divine nature and escape corruption through God's exceeding great and precious promises that we find in His Word.

5. How did Jesus overcome temptation?

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)

NOTE: Christ overcame temptation through exercising faith in God’s Word. It was not simply quoting the Word that gave Him the victory, but it was submitting Himself to that Word. 1 Peter 2:21 teaches us that Christ is our example. We will overcome as He overcame.



“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
(Psalm 119:11)

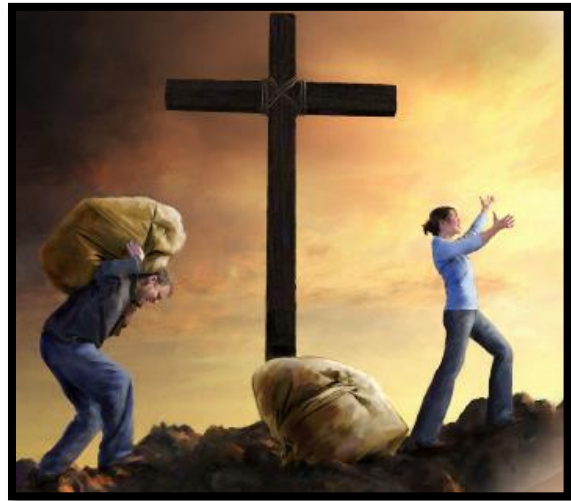
NOTE: It is the Word of God that gives us the power to overcome sin daily. If Eve had believed the Word of God, she would never have sinned. Eve had the Word of God that plainly told her not to eat from the tree. Satan came with his new word that said that she may eat from the tree. If Eve then believed the Word of God, she would never have sinned. As long as she believed God’s Word she never could have sinned. The same is true with Adam. Now that principle is just as true today as it was that day. The person today who believes God, will not sin. As long as we believe God, we cannot sin. This principle is eternal. But this calls for really believing God – not accepting one Word, and rejecting another. We need to believe every Word of God if we want to overcome sin. This is why Christ said that without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5), and that we can do everything when He gives us the power (Philippians 4:13).

6. Does the Bible promise us that we can overcome sin?

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” (Romans 8:37)

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ” (2 Corinthians 2:14)

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4)



“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.” (1 John 3:6)

NOTE: God’s Word is abundantly clear that our faith is the victory. What is faith? Faith is understanding that God’s Word is always true because it has creative power (See “Chapter 2 – What is Faith?”). **When we exercise faith in God’s Word, and thus abide in Him, we will overcome all sin.** To state that we cannot overcome all sin is to undermine the power of the gospel, and to make the power of sin stronger than the power of God.

7. What is the first step to understand when we want to overcome sin?

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:57)

NOTE: Satan will always be stronger than us and thus we cannot overcome temptation using our own power. Victory is a gift! We do not earn it by our efforts, or deserve it because of any supposed goodness. The only thing we need do is ask for it, and the victory will be given to us freely by Christ. He is the only one who has ever gained the victory over Satan, and if we ever possess the victory, it will have to come as a gift from Him.

8. What is the second step to understand when we want to overcome sin?

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” (Matthew 7:11)

NOTE: Do you need victory over some sinful habit in your life? Tobacco, swearing, lustful thoughts, gossiping? The Bible says you may have the victory as a gift through Jesus Christ. We should ask Him for the power to overcome sin. If we want the victory, then we will ask Him for it. He has already told us in the Bible that it is His will to save us from sin. How do we know we have the victory after we ask Him? Simply because He said we would have it. We know God cannot lie. We can believe His promises. The very moment we ask, we should accept the fact of fulfilment, thank Him for the gift, and get up and act like it has been done. No kind of proof, feeling or sign should be demanded or expected. The self-fulfilling power in His promise is released in response to our faith alone.

9. What is the third step to understand when we want to overcome sin?

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:11)

NOTE: The word “reckon” means to believe, or to consider it done. Think about the story of Peter in Matthew 14. Christ’s Word enabled Peter to do the impossible – walk on water. As long as he was exercising faith in Christ’s Word, He could do the impossible. As soon as he doubted Christ’s Word, he started to sink. Now, what is the impossible thing as far as you are concerned? It is not walking on water. It is overcoming that sinful habit. Christ says that He will give the victory to you. As long as you believe that you have been delivered, you will have the victory. It is as simple as that. God’s Word will give the power. You won’t feel it, but it will be there. It will remain there as long as you accept it in faith. Even when sinful desires remain, Christ provides the power so that you do not need to yield to those sinful desires.

10. What is the fourth step to understand when we want to overcome sin?

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14)

NOTE: So strong is the confidence in the power of God that no consideration is given to falling under the power of that sin again. No provision should be made to fail. Victory does not depend on our strength but on God’s power. All plans that might involve any degree of compromise are abandoned.

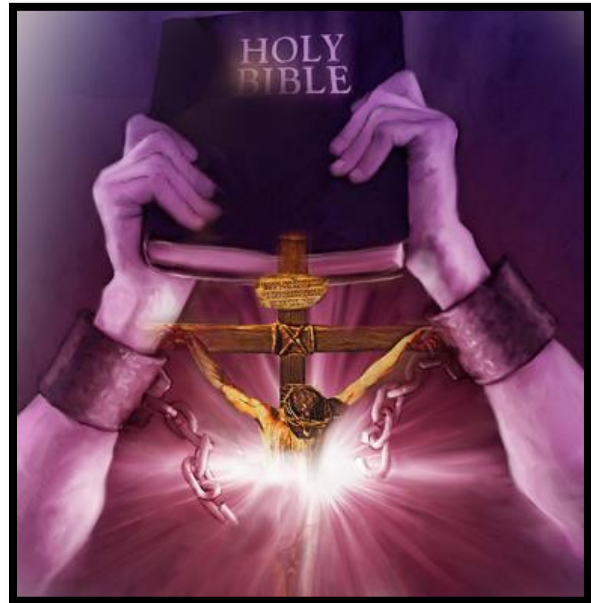
11. What if a person doubts God’s Word and falls into sin?

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

NOTE: He will set us free again. But He sets us free that we may hold steadfastly by a firmer faith to Him. In the bitterness of sin, we are taught our own weakness and worthlessness, and in the sweetness of His forgiveness we are taught His power to save. Even Peter began to sink when He doubted Christ’s Word. That didn’t change Christ’s will for him to walk on water. It wasn’t divine power that failed, but Peter that failed when he relied on his own power. It only pointed out Peter’s need of stronger faith to enable him to obey Christ’s command. If we fall into sin, we should repent and recommit our life to God. We should exercise more faith in His promises. In “Chapter 5 – Growing Your Faith” we learnt some principles to increase our faith. God’s promises will have no power for those who exercise no faith. The limits are clearly defined in the words of Jesus, “According to your faith be it unto you” (Matthew 9:29).

Summary

Christ not only came to save us from the consequences and guilt of sin, but also the power of sin. Through faith in God's Word we can overcome as Christ overcame. As long as we exercise faith in God's Word it is impossible for us to sin. Whenever we fall into sin, it is because for that moment our faith has let go of the Lord, and we are not believing in Him. God will daily sanctify us through His Word by revealing sins to us and providing the power to overcome them (John 17:17).



4 Keys 4 Victory

- 1. Realise that victory over sin is a gift from God, and not through our own works.** *1 Corinth. 15:57*
- 2. Claim the promises of God in the Bible by asking God for them.** *Matthew 7:11*
- 3. Believe that God's promises are true, because His Word has creative power.** *Romans 6:11*
- 4. Do not make provisions/plans to sin.** *Romans 13:14*

Your Response

Is it your desire to daily live by faith in God's Word and so live free from sin?

Answer: _____

1 Corinthians 13

- 1** If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.
- 2** And if I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
- 3** And if I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.
- 4** Love suffereth long, *and* is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
- 5** doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil;
- 6** rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth;
- 7** beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.
- 8** Love never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall be done away; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall be done away.
- 9** For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;
- 10** but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.
- 11** When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.
- 12** For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.
- 13** But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

©©2020 Armin Kritzingner

All Rights Reserved.

Book Edited Version 4

arminkritzingner@live.com

www.trustthisword.com

[YouTube: Armin Kritzingner](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3)