

The Simple Truth Series #11

Faith



A study of the sense our Spirit has called Faith.

What is it?

How do we get it?

How do we use it?

Why are there unanswered prayers?

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'And expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.' Acts 18:26.

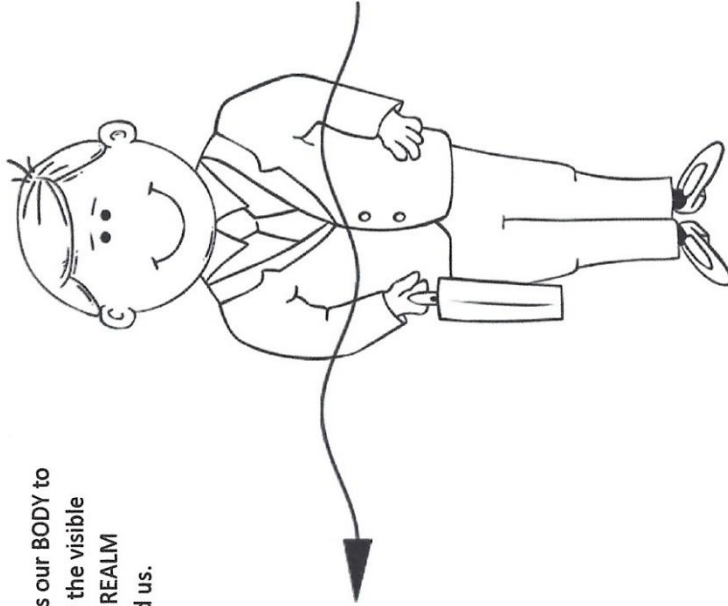
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BODY
PHYSICAL

SOUL
INTELLECTUAL

SPIRIT
SPIRITUAL



Our SOUL uses our BODY to
interact with the visible
PHYSICAL REALM
around us.

Our SOUL uses our SPIRIT to
interact with the unseen
SPIRITUAL REALM
around us.

SENSES
SIGHT
TASTE
TOUCH
SMELL
HEARING

SENSES
CONSCIENCE
IMAGINATION
REASON
AFFECTIONS
MEMORY

SENSES
FAITH
HOPE
REVERENCE
PRAYER
WORSHIP

1.

What is Faith?

Many people believe faith is some far off mysterious something, that we reach for, but can't quite grasp. Something elusive, that takes a momentous effort of believing on our part, to achieve. But the Bible promises, in Roman's 1:17, ***'The just shall live by faith.'*** Faith is meant to be so close, and so accessible, that we can live by faith, in our everyday lives.

Each one of us is made up of three separate parts as described in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, a body, a soul and a spirit. (See the Chart on page 2). Our body is the physical part of us, our soul is the intellectual part, and our spirit is the spiritual part. Our soul, being the intellect, is the conscious part of us, the control room, it's where our motives come from, and where all our decisions in life are made. That's why we are warned, ***'The soul that sinneth it shall die,'*** because it's the soul, that makes the decision to sin, so it's the soul that must pay the penalty for that sin.

Because our body and spirit don't have any intellect, neither can act independently from our Soul. Our soul uses our body to interact with the visible physical world around us, by using our physical senses of sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing. Our soul uses our spirit to interact with the unseen Spiritual world around us by using our Spiritual senses of faith, hope, reverence, prayer and worship.

The Spiritual world is here, but it's another dimension that our Physical senses can't perceive. We can't see, smell, taste, touch, or hear it, but it's all around us. When Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac, as told in Genesis 22, an Angel called to him, ***'out of Heaven.'*** So, where was Heaven? Was it 10 million light years away? No, it was another dimension right there; and the Angel opened a window between the Spiritual and Physical worlds, to speak to Abraham.

Our Body, Soul, and Spirit each have five senses. Our physical senses are; sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing. Our Spiritual senses are; faith, hope, reverence, prayer and worship. And our Intellectual senses are; conscience, imagination, reason, affections, and memory. Our physical senses are used in the physical world, our spiritual senses are used in the spiritual world, but the senses of our soul are used in both worlds.

The sense our spirit has called faith, allows us to believe something we cannot see; as Paul tells us in Hebrews 11:1, ***'Faith is the evidence of things not seen,'*** because faith knows the unseen exists, even if we can't see, taste, touch, smell, or hear it.

If we didn't have this sense called faith, seeing would be believing, and we wouldn't believe anything we couldn't see. We wouldn't believe anything anyone tells us, and we couldn't trust anyone. But faith allows us to drive over a bridge, and believe it won't

fall over when we're half-way across. Faith allows us to plan events, next week, next month, and even next year, because faith allows us to believe there will *be*, a next week, a next month, and a next year, even though we can't *see* them today, because faith is the evidence they exist.

Because every person in this world has a Spirit, every person in this world has faith, as a sense of their Spirit. The unbelieving world refers to faith, as 'mind over matter,' or 'positive thinking,' or any number of other phrases they use to describe something they see the effects of, but can't understand, or classify. It is defined as, 'Psychokinesis.' Psycho, as in the mind, and kinesis, as in kinetics, or movement. Or, we could say, 'affecting physical things, by the power of your mind.'

When someone takes a glass and concentrates on it, until it shatters, they are using faith to do that. They are doing what Jesus promised in Matt 17:20, when He said, ***"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."*** But more on that later.

2.

How do we get Faith?

Where did we get the five senses of our Body from? Sight, taste, touch, smell, and hearing? Did we buy them when we were old enough to deliver newspapers, and earn some money? Did we find them under our pillow one morning? No, we were born with them, and we have the same eyes, ears, nose, etc, all our lives.

Where did we get the senses of our Soul from? Did we get them for Christmas when we were seven? Did we catch them when we were fishing? No. Again, we were born with them, and we have the same conscience, imagination, reason, etc, all our lives, from the day we were born.

And where did we get the senses of our Spirit from? Did we get them from Aunt Mildred for our 12th birthday? Did we get them as a prize for winning a race? No. We were born with them too. We were born with the ability to pray every prayer we're ever going to pray. We were born with the ability to worship, as much as we're ever going to worship. And, we were born with as much faith as we're ever going to have.

But, it's like our legs. We were all born with legs, but we weren't born running, we weren't even born walking. We had to learn *how* to use our legs. And even though we were all born with the Faith to move mountains, we have to learn *how* to use that Faith.

In Roman's 10:17, we are told, ***'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.'*** Does this verse tell us we get faith by hearing the Word of God? No, we already

have faith, everyone does. But, until we hear the Word of God, we can't use faith for its intended purpose, because we don't have the Word of God to apply it to. Spiritually, faith is not, 'blind faith,' based on nothing. Faith is based on the Word of God. When the Lord promised, ***"They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover,"*** (Mark 16:18), people are healed when we lay hands on them, not because we *hope* they will be healed, but because we have faith in this promise, that the Lord Jesus will be faithful to His Word.

Without the Word of God, we only have hope, and hope is a mixture of faith and doubt, meaning something which may, or may not happen, because hope is not based on anything certain. The Word of God without faith applied to it is only ***'the letter,'*** and as it was with Israel, ***'...the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith, in them that heard it.'*** (Hebrews 4:2). So ***'Faith cometh by hearing the Word of God,'*** because faith applied to the Word of God brings it to life.

In Luke 17:5, the Lord's Disciples asked Him to increase their faith. He could have said, "Ok boys, here's a cup of faith each, drink it up, and nothing will be impossible to you." But, He didn't. Instead, He showed them how much faith they already had, by giving them the example, of what faith the size of a mustard seed could achieve. It could pluck a tree out of the land, and plant it in the sea. And they already had more faith than that, we all do. We don't grow in faith by getting *more* faith. We grow in faith by *applying* faith to the promises of God, and *believing* He will be faithful to His Word, and perform that which He has promised to do.

When the Centurion came to the Lord when his servant was sick, he said, ***"speak the Word only, and my servant shall be healed."*** (Matthew 8:8). The Lord Jesus said, ***"I have not found such great faith, no not in Israel."*** But, when His Disciples doubted Him several times, He rebuked them saying, ***"Oh ye of little faith."*** The difference between ***'great faith,'*** and ***'little faith,'*** isn't a difference in *volume*, (*much* as compared to *less*), it's a difference in application; the Centurion trusted Him, but the Disciples didn't. And if anyone asked the Lord to 'increase their faith' today, He would do exactly the same to them, and show them how much faith they already have. Faith to move mountains.

We would literally *astound* ourselves, if we believed for all we are capable of. Brother Branham once rightly stated, "You have enough Faith to create a world, and go and live on it."

3.

What is Faith given to us for?

So, just what is faith given to us for? Is it to move mountains, as we just read? No. As we read earlier, *'The just shall live by faith.'* It's faith to live by in our daily lives. Romans 12:3 tells us, *'God hath dealt to every man,* (and that includes every woman, and every child) *the measure of faith.'* We were born with it, as a sense of our spirit. Because every person in this world *has* faith, every person in this world, believer, or unbeliever, lives by faith.

Imagine little Johnny, he's five years old, and he wants to go and play at the park, so Dad takes him. Johnny climbs to the crow's nest, at the top of the pirate ship, and he's so proud of himself. He yells, "Look at me Daddy, I'm on top of the world!" Then he looks down at the ground, and it's so far away, so he screams, "Daddy help!" Dad says, "Okay Johnny, just hang down off the bar, then let go and I'll catch you." "No!" Johnny yells. "Come on Johnny, just hang down, and let go, and I'll catch you. Promise!" "No!" Johnny screams again. But finally, Johnny relents. He hangs down, closes his eyes as tightly as he can, let's go, and Daddy catches him. It took faith, for Johnny to let go of that bar, and trust Daddy to catch him.

Johnny grows up, and has a family of his own. When he goes grocery shopping, and buys bread, butter, milk, and whatever else they need, he doesn't get them analysed, before he feeds them to his family. No, he trusts the manufacturers, that they haven't put rat poison in them. And *again*, that takes faith. And that's the same simple faith it takes, to trust the Lord for your salvation, or to move a mountain, or for anything else we are promised in the Bible. Without faith, we could not trust anyone, anytime, but having faith allows us to take people at their word, and believe them.

So, every person in this world *does* live by faith, because we use faith to trust every Tom, Dick, and Harry, in this world. But that's not the way the Lord intended faith to be used, because faith is a Spiritual sense, and it's given to us for a Spiritual purpose, which is, to take God at His Word, and believe that what He has promised, He is also able to perform.

I cannot use the faith I was born with, to cast out a demon. But, the Lord said, ***"All power in Heaven and earth is given unto Me."*** And, because I am His son, I can confidently say, "In the Name of Jesus Christ I bind you, and command you to leave this person," and that spirit has to leave.

4.

How do we use Faith?

If you say this to a mountain

When the Lord Jesus spoke about Faith, He did it in two distinctly different ways. He said, *“If you say,”* and, *“If you ask.”* These are the two different ways in which we use Faith. In Matthew 21:18-22, it reads, *‘Now in the morning: as He returned into the city, He hungered. And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have Faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.’*

In Luke 17:5-6 it reads, *‘And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our 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.’*

This is not us asking the Lord to move the mountain, or plant the tree in the sea. This is us, using the faith we were born with, to tell the mountain or tree to move. If you say to this mountain....if you say to this tree...You don’t even have to be a Christian to do that. It’s people using the faith they were born with.

A ‘Magician,’ can do ‘magic’ tricks using ‘sleight of hand,’ or, as they say in their own parlance, ‘the hand is faster than the eye.’ These are ‘tricks’ that can be learned by anyone, and are only an ‘illusion’ that they are magic; just the same as the shopkeeper, who counts out your change before your eyes, but short-changes you.

Then there are ‘Magicians,’ who venture beyond ‘sleight of hand,’ into the realm of performing ‘tricks,’ (if we can call them that), at a distance from their body. A common one, is to concentrate on a glass, and make it shatter, which is a classic example of ‘Psychokinesis.’ When they move an object from one of your pockets, into another one or from your bag, into a pocket, this is another ball game entirely, miles ahead of ‘sleight of hand,’ which dazzles their audience, because they aren’t physically in touch with the object involved. These people have learned **how** to use the Faith they were born with. To make a distant object move, is something anyone could master using faith, if they practiced it.

Some ‘Christian’ Ministries, ‘throw out the baby with the bath water,’ by labelling anything paranormal as ‘demonic.’ I do wonder what they would have done if they had

watched the Lord curse the fig tree, and seen it wither away? I'm sure they would have left His side, and returned to their fishing, or farming. Religious unbelief, is no different than atheistic unbelief.

There is a phenomenon which seems exclusive to Germany, called a Poltergeist, or 'Noisy Ghost.' Our 'Noisy Ghost' reveals its presence, by throwing crockery, (in particular), across a room. It will also throw cutlery and other objects, sometimes aimed at a particular person.

A study was made of Poltergeist activity in the 1960's, and it was found in each case study, there was a troubled child, or teenager, present in the house at the time of the manifestation. Those conducting the study, originally presumed the activity to be paranormal (ghostly,) in origin, but came to the conclusion it was somehow linked to the youths involved, particularly, when they noted the activity halted, once the youths in question, grew out of their troubled state. From memory, I believe they gave the phenomena a name, but I would call it Psychokinesis, as the Lord said, ***"If you say to...And don't doubt in your heart, nothing shall be impossible unto you."***

I had a voice recorder, that I used to record notes when I managed a deer farm. When the batteries went flat, I couldn't drive to town to get more, so I would say, "Let these batteries be recharged, in the Name of Jesus Christ," and they would be. When I recorded notes with a pen and paper, and my pen ran out of ink, I would hold it up and say "Let this pen be refilled in the Name of Jesus Christ," and it would be refilled.

We had a gas heater to heat our home, and when it ran out of gas, and we couldn't afford to buy more, we would bang three times on the top of it with a fist, and the bottle would be refilled. My daughter Cassia who was 6 or 7 refilled it several times. You don't have to be one of the twelve Disciples to do that. Anyone in the world can do it, even an unbeliever, if you don't doubt. That's using the faith we were born with.

When I ransacked my yacht, but couldn't find the ropes for my hammock, I said out loud, "In the morning they will be hanging on the masts where they belong," and they were. When I lost the keys to the farm, and spent an hour searching fruitlessly, I said, "They're in the right pocket of my raincoat," even though I had searched the pockets at least seven times already. But they were in there, after saying that.

I have had a myriad of such experiences, as have others. A Minister told how he could retrieve his pocket-knife from his hotel room to his pocket, while he was standing behind a pulpit preaching. This is just believing what the Lord said...

If you say to this voice recorder...

If you say to these keys.....

If you say to these ropes..

If you say to this knife...and don't doubt in your heart...

This is us using the Faith we were born with naturally. Every person in the world uses faith like this to some extent. But, in using faith like this, we can only use it to affect *natural* things. As Psychokinesis suggests, affecting *physical* things with your mind.

But faith is a Spiritual sense, and when we pray according to John 14:14, ***“If you shall ask anything in My name I will do it for you.”*** Then we are using faith to trust the Lord to do the things He has promised us, things that we cannot do by using faith at the *natural*, or *physical* level. Which brings us to the second way we use faith.

5.

How do we use Faith? Ask and you shall receive.

Matthew 7:7, ***“Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.”***

Matthew 21:22, ***“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”***

John 14:13, ***“And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”***

John 14:14, ***“If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it.”***

John 15:7, ***“If ye abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”***

John 15:16, ***“Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you.”***

John 16:23, ***“And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing; Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you.”***

Why do we ask for something? Because we don't have it, or we can't get it. The things we can do by using faith at the natural level, are limited to affecting natural things. But to use faith at the Spiritual level, is out of reach of the natural man, even though faith is a Spiritual sense that we all possess. The Lord Jesus declared, ***“All power in Heaven and in earth is given unto Me,”*** Not just a part of it, but **All** of it. And He promised above,

“Ask in My Name.” “Ask anything.” “Ask what ye will.” Etc.

So, what happens when we ask? *“It shall be given you.” “Ye shall receive.” “That will I do.”* Etc. These are Promises the Lord Himself gave us. Do we believe Him? Or do we believe He didn't mean what He said? To use faith at the Spiritual, or Supernatural level, means taking the Lord at His Word, and Trusting Him to do what He promised He would do, just as Abraham was, *‘fully persuaded, that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.’* (Romans 4:21). Those things that are beyond our reach as natural men are within our grasp if we take the Lord at His Word. He has the Power to do all that we are unable to do, if we are fully persuaded, that what He has promised, He is also able to perform.

6.

How do we use Faith? In My Name they shall...

At Calvary the Lord's work of Atonement for sin was completed, when He cried, *“It is finished,”* and He could ascend into Glory leaving the Church, as His Body on earth to continue the work of reconciliation. Between His Resurrection from the tomb, and His Ascension, the Lord prepared His Church for their Ministry, by giving them the Great Commission, where He commanded, *“All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”* (Matthew 28:18-20).

He has all Power in Heaven and earth, so He Commissioned His Church by giving them Authority to Baptize and teach in His Name using that power.

He further expounded on their Ministry, on another occasion, by saying, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”* (Mark 16:15-18).

His Church was given the Authority to speak in His Name. All these things are done by faith in *His Name*. His Church was given the Authority to affect Spiritual things by faith as the Lord promised, *“In My Name they shall cast out devils;”* etc. etc.

St Paul reminded us to, *‘Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against*

spiritual wickedness in high places.' (Ephesians 6:11-12).

Our battle is not with flesh and blood, it is with the unclean spirits that occupy flesh and blood, to war against the Kingdom of God. To fight a spiritual battle, we need a Spiritual power, this is why we needed the Authority to speak, ***"In the Name of Jesus Christ."*** As the Centurion said unto the Lord, ***"I know you have the Authority, so just Speak the Word only, and my servant shall be healed."*** (Matthew 8:8-9).

To the cripple at the Temple gate Peter said, ***"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee: in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."*** (Acts 3:6).

It seems that we have Spoken in the Name of Jesus Christ, to cast out demons, but very little else, except perhaps in some Ministries notably that of William Branham where it was used often. We have all been so well off financially, that we have had very little actual need in our lives, and have mostly been content to let Doctors, and Surgeons attend to our infirm.

But the time is coming, when there will be a Godless World Government controlling this world; attended by a Godless World Religion controlling all religious expression. Their World Bank will control all financial transactions on earth, which will be digital.

All those brave souls, including Godly Christians, who are brave enough to say "NO," to this tyrannical Police State, will be living in a parallel universe to the mainstream, where silver and gold we will have none of, being barred from buying food, petrol, or anything else, and we will have no access to Doctors, Hospitals, electricity, water, etc. How will we survive then? I'm sure we will all learn to rely on the Word of God, and Speak the Word, in the Name of Jesus Christ, to supply all our needs, until the Lord Jesus returns, to take us Home.

The Lord clearly warns us about this in Revelation 13:15-17. ***'And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or on their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.'*** But how many took it seriously? We clapped and sang our way through Worship, ignoring the warnings, as the world closed in on us.

7.

Faith and Hope.

Faith is not hope. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. You haven't seen it yet, but you know it's *going* to happen, because the Lord promised it. Faith and hope are completely different senses. ***'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.'*** (Titus 1:2). This sense called hope places within the spirit of every person born, a desire to find some way to live eternally.

Job said, *“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.”* (Job 14:7-10, and 14).

Job saw a tree die, and live again, and he asked *“But what about man? Can he live again?”* He wasn’t asking, “What about man?” so much as, “What about *me*?” It was personal. He was asking for himself. That’s why we have such a proliferation of Religions and Cults around the world. It’s hungry people trying to find the answer to the question that hope has placed within their Spirit, “What about me?” So, hope has nothing to do with faith, spiritually.

8.

If you know He has heard you, trust Him to answer you.

1 John 5:15 says, *‘And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.’* John is telling us, if we know that He has heard us, then we **know** He’s going to do what we asked. Remember, He created the earth, the universe, and all that is known to us, as well as the unknown Spiritual Realm, without our help, or interference; so, anything we ask Him to do for us is a minor thing compared with them.

If you go into a Hamburger Bar, and ask for a hamburger with no mayonnaise, the owner will go to make it. And if you ask for a hamburger with no mayonnaise two minutes later; then ask for a hamburger with no mayonnaise again, another two minutes later; then ask for a hamburger with no mayonnaise another two minutes later; then ask for a hamburger with no mayonnaise another two minutes later; the owner will come out in twenty minutes with, “Your five hamburgers Sir!” If you want one, ask once. If you want five, ask five times. But we ask the Lord for something, then ask again, and again, and again, as if we don’t believe He heard us the first time.

John told us, *‘If you know He has heard you, then you know you have it.’* So, ask once, if you believe He has heard you. And if you want to pray again, Praise Him for answering you, and thank Him for granting what you asked. But don’t show your unbelief by asking over, and over, and over, for the same thing.

There are times when you do need to pray, until you see your prayer answered. A Scriptural example is 1 Kings 18:42-44. After three and a half years of drought in Israel, Elijah prayed for rain. As he prayed, he sent his servant to *‘look toward the sea,’* but he saw nothing. His servant went and looked again seven times, and on the seventh time he saw a cloud about the size of a man’s hand, and Elijah knew the drought was over.

If your car won't start, and you need to get to work, pray for it. If it still won't start, pray again, and again, until it does. But if you can't believe prayer will start your car, call the AA, or your neighbour. The Lord won't spank you for calling the AA, or for going to a doctor, or for taking medicine. There is too much fanaticism in this world, and it never brings glory to the Lord.

One of my friends visited a man who was sitting on his veranda, with his motor mower on the lawn. The grass was half-way to his knees, but he said he was waiting to see if the Lord told him to mow his lawn or not. He didn't need the Lord to tell him anything, common sense should have told him it was long overdue to be cut. The Lord gave us common sense, to stop us behaving like complete morons *all* the time. But fanatics always act like morons.

9.

Believing is seeing.

Our young friend Johnny, whom we met earlier, becomes a Christian. He reads about prayer in the Bible, and he hears testimonies about answered prayer, so he decides to pray for something himself. He's read where the Lord said, "***if you say to this mountain be removed, and don't doubt, it will happen;***" but we don't normally start there, we start with something we feel is achievable. So, Johnny prays for something minor, but when he prays, he is putting the Lord to the test. He wants to know, not so much if God *will* answer prayers, because he's heard testimonies of answered prayer. But, more importantly, he wants to know if God will answer prayer for 'little-old-insignificant-Johnny.' So, he's putting the Lord to the test.

The Lord is gracious to His young children, the way any good parent is gracious to their young children, and He answers Johnny's prayer quickly, because He knows, to Johnny, seeing is believing. If Johnny doesn't see it happen, he won't believe it's happened. So, the Lord answers Johnny's prayer quickly, and that gives Johnny confidence to pray for other things, even bigger things.

It may go in like this for six months, or six years, but finally the Lord will say, "Ok Johnny, you tell Me you trust Me? Let Me check?" In 1 Peter 1:7, Peter talks about, '***The trial of your faith.***' The Lord will test our faith, to find out if we really believe what we profess we believe.

So, the next time Johnny prays, his prayer is not answered until a week later. Johnny thinks, "Mmm, wasn't quite what I was expecting, but I can work with that." The next time Johnny prays, it might be two weeks or longer, until his prayer is answered. Then a month. Two months. Six months. Or even a year. But by this time, it doesn't bother Johnny, because he finally realizes he had it wrong all this time. Seeing isn't believing. His prayer wasn't answered because he *saw* it happen. It was answered because he *believed* it would happen. To the Christian, believing is seeing, because our faith is the

evidence of what we haven't seen yet. Seeing is believing is for unbelievers.

I have two old Christian friends who were lamenting about the good-old-days to me. They were both saying they could remember when they laid hands on people, and saw miracles happen before their eyes. I remember that too. They asked me what's changed? What's gone wrong? Why doesn't it happen now? I told them nothing's gone wrong. The Lord just stopped treating us like children, because He expects some maturity from us. He expects us to believe, ***'What He has promised, He is also able to perform,'*** and that He *has* performed it.

There was a Sister who went to Smith Wigglesworth, and was prayed for, for a big goitre on her neck. Six months later at another meeting, she got up and testified, the Lord had healed her of the goitre. As she walked down off the platform, someone said "But you aren't healed, the goitre is still in your neck." She replied, "Yes, I was healed six months ago, when I was prayed for." That night in prayer, she said, "Lord, I *know* you healed me, now let the rest of the world *know*." When she woke in the morning it was gone. Seeing isn't believing. Believing is seeing. Amen!

Sometimes, you can pray for something, and, "Whoa.. There it is!" At other times, you will pray, and fight a fight of faith for every minute of six months, before you see it. But the outcome is exactly the same in both cases, so why not rest on the promises of God, and trust Him exactly the same in both cases, confessing your belief from the beginning, as the Sister did?

10.

Being specific in prayer.

When we pray, we should always be specific, and tell the Lord exactly what we want. If you are praying for a wife or husband, tell the Lord what height you want them to be, what eye colour, hair colour, skin colour, you want them to have. What interests you would like them to have. Prayer isn't meant to be a lucky dip. The Lord promised, ***"Whatsoever you ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive."*** So, always ask for exactly what you want, because you're going to get what you ask for.

At one time I was invited to speak at a Church, but both of my shoes had split open on the side, so I prayed for a pair of size 8, wide, brown shoes. The next day I had to visit a friend in need, and when I arrived, he told me he had seen an expensive pair of shoes two days before, that were marked down in price so much, that he had to buy them, even though they weren't his size. He looked at my feet and said, "They *may* fit you?" Of course they did, because they were size 8, wide, brown shoes. It seems the Lord had sent him shopping for my shoes, the day before I prayed for them. Bless His Name.

11.

Having Faith in your Anointing.

I'm not against prayer lines in Churches, because I have had to pray for many, and the Bible exhorts us to, ***'Pray one for another,'*** (James 5:16). But I've never been a fan of them, for two reasons. Firstly, because when we have a prayer line, we are asking someone else to pray our prayers for us, and that is not the Lord's Will. The curtain enclosing the Holy of Holies was torn open, by the Lord himself after Calvary, to give every Christian unhampered access to the Throne of God.

I had a friend who would phone me and say, "Could you pray for this please, it's urgent?" And I did, for a long time. But then, one night he phoned, and asked, "Could you pray for this please?" I replied, "Yes, I could, but I'm not going to. The Lord doesn't want to hear your prayers coming from my mouth, He wants to hear them from you." He begged, "But this is urgent?" "You pray, and you trust the Lord, and He will do that for you," I said. He wasn't happy with that, but I knew he was capable of so much more than what he believed he was capable of, so we left it at that. In the morning, he phoned early, elated, "I prayed last night, and a miracle happened this morning!" he blurted out. Yes, of course it did, because he was doing it the Lord's way.

Most of us have more confidence in the prayers of others, than our own, because we are painfully aware of our own failings. We seem to believe the Lord will hear other's prayers willingly, because we are unaware of their faults. James told us, ***'Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.'*** (James 5:17).

'Subject to like passions,' means, 'suffering similar things.' Going through the same things. This was also echoed by Paul at Lystra, when the Priest of Jupiter was going to sacrifice oxen to him and Barnabas, after a crippled man was healed, and the people believed 'Gods' had come down among them. But Paul cried out, ***"We also are men of like passions with you."*** They were ordinary men, with the failings of ordinary men, but as he acknowledged in 1 Corinthians 3:16, ***'Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'***

He also reminded us in 2 Corinthians 4:7, that, ***'... we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.'*** We bear our Creator around in frail vessels of clay, subject to the same failings as other frail earthen vessels which do not contain Him. Heavenly treasure in earthly vessels. But it was God's Plan, that His Presence should be borne on earth by earthen vessels. We may not have confidence in the vessel, but we should have faith in the Treasure, the Anointing it carries. The Holy Spirit.

The second reason why I am not a great fan of prayer lines, is because, when we have a prayer line, most of the participants are supposing the person doing the praying has more faith than they do. But that is not true. That's like saying I have more eyes than

you, or more ears than you, which is never true either. We all have two eyes, and we were all given a measure of Faith. But it *is* true that some people do not have much confidence to trust the Lord, whereas others trust Him implicitly.

12.

Faith that pleases God.

Hebrews 11:6, declares, ***'But without faith it is impossible to please Him.'*** It doesn't say, without faith it's **hard** to please Him. It warns us it's **impossible**. So, if Faith pleases the Lord so much that it's impossible to please Him *without* Faith, it begs the question; Why does Faith please Him so much? The short answer is, because Faith sees what He sees, so Faith is on the same page as the Lord.

In Isaiah 46:9-10, we are told, ***'...I am God and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done...'*** When the Lord says something is going to happen, it's as though it's already happened, even before it takes place. He declares the end from the beginning, because to Him, if He has Spoken it, it's already a finished work.

As an example, when was Jesus killed? I would say 2000 years ago, according to events in the Bible. But if we look at Revelation 13:8, it reads, ***'And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'*** Before Creation began, the Lord looked ahead through time, and chose the time when Jesus would be killed, and to Him it happened when He thought of it, it was already fulfilled then.

I believe I was saved in 1976, but in Revelation 17:8, it says, ***'... and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world.'*** My Name was put in the Book of Life before Creation began, and as far as the Lord is concerned, I was saved then.

Roman's 8:29-30, also echoes this. ***'For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.'***

The Lord foreknew us before Creation began, when He put our names on the Book of Life, so He predestined (fore-ordained) us to be part of the Body of Christ (Christians).

Because He predestinated us, He called us during our lifetime, and because He called us, He justified us, and glorified us. To the Lord, these things, called, justified, and glorified, were a finished work before Creation began, an Eternity before we were born, because He saw the end at the beginning. And these things, called, justified, and glorified, are in the past tense, meaning they *are* already done.

The Lord sees us right now in our completed, glorified, state. Perfected. Because He sees the end from the beginning. And that's what Faith sees. Remember the Sister with

the Goitre? The Goitre was still there physically, but she confessed, I was healed six months ago when I was prayed for. She declared the end from the beginning.

I said, "The ropes will be hanging on the masts in the morning." "My keys are in the pocket of the raincoat." Faith always declares the end at the beginning, because Faith *sees* the end at the beginning. That's what the Lord sees, and that's *why* Faith pleases Him so much.

A man was going to push a wheelbarrow across a wire over Niagara Falls, and a large crowd had assembled, to watch the event. He asked the crowd if they believed he could do it, and they replied, "Yes!" enthusiastically. Then he asked one of them to come and sit in the wheelbarrow? But he didn't have any takers. They *believed* he could do it, but they didn't *trust* him. Many Christians are like that towards the Lord, they know He can do it, but they won't trust Him to do it for *them*. But our Faith should back up our confession. We should trust the Lord to do what we confess He *can* do.

When Elijah stood on Mt Carmel with the 400 prophets of Baal, they had a showdown; and Elijah challenged them, "***Let the God that answers by fire be God.***" Then he said, "***All this I have done at Your Word.***" He had been obedient to what the Lord asked of him. Then the fire of God fell, and consumed his sacrifice. And, if we will take the Lord at His Word, and do all that He asks us to do, then we can trust Him to step in, and do all He has promised to us.

13.

Wolves in sheep's clothing.

It is a Truth, that all that glitters is not gold. Unfortunately, this is also true in Christian circles. When the Lord Jesus died on Calvary, the curtain enclosing the Holy of Holies was torn open from top to bottom, so the way into the Presence of God was now opened freely, for all who would seek to know Him. In a later century, the Catholic Church decided to close this up again, and make their Priests 'mediators' between the Lord, and mankind, so mankind could only contact the Lord through their mediators, something which the Lord does not recognise, nor approve.

We also have a problem with that today, which began with Oral Roberts and the 'Prosperity Gospel,' and has proliferated among the modern 'Televangelists' especially, to become a plague. "Name it and claim it," is their catch-cry, after you have paid them for it, of course.

When needy people come to these 'Televangelists,' desperate for help from the Lord, they are asked to give a 'seed faith' donation, which they are told the Lord will honour, by answering their prayer. The bigger the need, the bigger the 'seed' to be sown. Greed is their motive. And it seems their 'God' is supposed to be in on it too, because He honours your 'seed' by answering your prayer, after you have handed over the 'necessary.'

Judas only got thirty pieces of silver, but this lot hit the jackpot and they're all mega-millionaires. Poor old St Paul roughed, and toughed it to Preach the Gospel, and his advice was, *'For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.'* (1 Timothy 6:7-8).

In their defence, the Wolves quote among other things, the Parable of the Sower from Matthew 13, *'Behold, a sower went forth to sow... But, other (seed) fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.'* And Luke 6:38, *'Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom, For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.'*

Why is it that the congregation do all the giving, and the Wolves do all the taking? Not long ago, one of them asked his congregation to give him a \$65 million jet. If he practiced what he preached, he would give the Lord a 'seed' offering, and the Lord would give *him* a jet. Does he really believe what he preaches? Or is it just a ploy to con his congregation?

This 'seed faith' ploy, is a common practice of such con-artists. These people aren't 'Sheep,' because, when anyone questions them about this practice, they get bitten. One of them has even promised, if you want a Condo (Condominium), give him a four or five figure 'seed faith' donation, and someone will stop you on the street, and hand you the keys to your Condo. How do these sleazebags sleep at night? They obviously don't have a conscience.

There is no Mediator between you and the Lord, and He won't con you for a fiver when you pray. The promise in James 5:15 is, *'The prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord will raise Him up.'* All He asks of us is faith (trust), He never said to give a \$100 'seed faith' donation, to some sleazebag, who lives in a mansion, and owns a private jet, or two, or three. These are the people He chased out of the Temple in John 2:13-16, and gave a whipping to for good measure, calling them a den of thieves. History repeats itself once again.

14.

Why are there unanswered prayers?

In Matthew 21:22, the Lord Jesus promised, *'And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.'* And in Matthew 18:19, He promised, *'Again, I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, of My Father which is in Heaven.'*

Promises like these make it sound as though all of our prayers will be answered, so it makes us ask, why are there unanswered prayers? It sounds like there shouldn't be any? I don't have all the answers, but there are some obvious ones.

Firstly, there's unbelief. You can pray all night for something, but if you don't believe it will happen, it won't. The Lord's promise was, ***'whatsoever you ask for in prayer believing, ye shall receive.'*** In Psalm 78:40-41, we are told of Israel, *'How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness, and grieve Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.'* When we limit the Lord to what we believe He is able to do, that is unbelief.

Secondly there's doubt. Remember the wheelbarrow over Niagara Falls? If we confess the Lord can do something, but we can't trust Him to do it for us, then we are doubting Him, and again that's unbelief.

Thirdly, we have to ask according to His Will. 1 John 5:14 promises, ***'And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us.'*** Everything we do should be according to the Will of God, but too often prayer isn't, even though those in prayer are well intentioned.

A classic example of this is when someone contacts a Christian, and tells them, "Bob's been in an accident, he's in Intensive Care now, and it seems he may not survive." So, our Christian friend contacts five others, who all agree to pray for Bob, quoting Matthew 18:19, ***'if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, of my Father which is in Heaven.'***

So, it seems like it's an open and shut case, and they all pray for Bob, but then he dies. And they're left asking, "Why did Bob die, when we were all praying in agreement, as the Lord promised?" But were they in agreement? If you listened to their prayers, it would reveal a different scenario.

A, is a man of very bold faith, so he boldly states, out loud, "Let Bob rise up from the hospital bed right now, healed in the Name of Jesus, and let him walk out of the Hospital today, giving glory to God!"

B, is more conservative, so he prays, "Let Bob recover from this, and go home completely healed, in the Name of Jesus."

C, is a very compassionate lady, so she prayed, "Lord, please let Bob pass from this life into Your Presence quickly, without pain, or lingering between life or death, and may his family all be at peace with it."

D, and E, likewise, pray for completely different outcomes to their prayers. So, what is the Lord to do? They've given Him a multi-choice question to answer. If He answers A's prayer, then He can't answer B, C, D, or E's. And likewise with B, C, D and E. They aren't in agreement at all, in fact they're *out* of the Will if God, whenever they pray like this; and whenever we step outside the Will and Word of God, we go there without Him.

Fourthly, if it's healing of our body we seek, why do we want to be healed? 1 John 3:22 promises, ***'And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in His sight.'*** The Lord does not want to heal someone, just so they can have a healthier body to sin with. But if someone wants to be healed, so they can serve the Lord with a healthier body, then that is surely, ***'pleasing in His sight.'***

If someone is dying, but they really want to live, they should make themselves valuable to the Lord, by spending their time testifying about Him, and His plan of Salvation, and when they aren't doing that, they should be in prayer. If they become valuable to the Lord, by ***'doing those things that are pleasing in His sight,'*** then He has a *reason* to keep them alive, and a purpose to keep them alive *for*.

Fifthly, the *Word* of God, is not the *Will* of God in every situation. The Lord promises us in Mark 16:18, ***"They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them."*** So, if we get bitten by a snake in our service to the Lord, it will not harm us, as was the case in Acts 28:3-6, ***'And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them in the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have been swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.'***

Snakes, and poison will not harm us if we are believers, doing our duty to the Lord. But there are Cults, which play with poisonous snakes and drink poison during their 'Church' Services, and people die from both, in the 'Church' Services. That is fanaticism, and fanaticism never brings glory to God, but ***'doing those things that are pleasing in His sight'*** does.

There was an unbeliever going around Churches in the U.S. during the 1920's. He would wait until after the Worship had ended, then go and place a bottle of strychnine on the Pulpit, and challenge, the congregation, "You say you believe the Bible? Jesus promised, ***'If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.'*** Now, one of you come up here and drink this, and prove the Bible is true!"

He went from Church to Church, without having any takers. Finally, he walked into a Church, that a young Minister named Roy Davis was attending. Roy turned to an old Minister next to him, and said, "I'm not going to let this infidel make fun of the Bible like this." The old man replied, "Just sit still and be quiet, and he will go away."

But Roy wasn't going to let this unbeliever go away, and leave the Church in defeat. He went to the Pulpit and took the bottle saying, "I'm not going to let this unbeliever make fun of the Lord or the Bible, even if it kills me." He drank the bottle of strychnine, and it did not harm him.

A sixth reason why prayer is unanswered, is when we expect something from a promise of God that He never promised us. A friend told me about a Sister in their Fellowship, who had been prayed for several times, but she added, "She hasn't been healed." There is nothing wrong with the Word of God, or the Power of God, but they were expecting something from a Promise of God, that He never promised us. In Mark 16:18, we are promised, ***'They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.'*** So, it promises the sick *will* recover.

If you go to a doctor, and tell him the symptoms you have, he will give you a prescription, and tell you to take one of these pills three times a day, and in three or four days you will be back to normal. So, you go home and take the first pill, but you don't yell, "Whoopee I'm healed!" No, you take them for three or four days, and you recover. That's what Mark 16 promises us, it promises we *will* recover. But these friends of mine were expecting the Sister to be healed on the spot, and when she wasn't, they professed she wasn't healed.

The Lord is always faithful to His Word, but He doesn't have to be faithful to our interpretation, or misinterpretation of it. If someone is prayed for, and they're healed on the spot, that's a Miracle, not a healing, and it does happen. But the promise to us was, they shall *recover*. The Lord never asked us to heal anyone, He only asked us to lay hands on the sick, and He promised He will see they recover from whatever ails them. In Mark 16:20, it recounts, ***'And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following.'*** So, we are asked to be faithful to the Word of God, and He will be faithful and confirm His Word with signs following, by bringing it to pass.

A seventh reason why prayers are not answered is, if the Lord has finished with us on this earth. He has to get us out of this body, so He will allow Satan to plague our body with a disease, or sickness, to destroy it, so we can step out of it and go to be with Him. No amount of prayer will move that sickness, because it's the Will of God.

A good example of this was Julius Stadskev's daughter. Brother Stadskev had written a book about William Branham, and when the Stadskev's baby daughter died, people were prophesying, "God's going to raise her up!" So, the Stadskev's called Brother Branham to come and pray for her.

Brother Branham heard about all the prophesying, but he said, "I'll just wait on the Lord first, and see what He tells me to do." So, he waited in prayer, and the Angel of the Lord said, "Don't touch that baby, that's the hand of the Lord."

So, Brother Branham reluctantly had to tell the Stadskev's, "Go and bury your baby, that's the Hand of the Lord, it's her time to go." We should always wait on the Lord, to be sure what His Will is in any situation, because, as Gamaliel said, ***"If this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."*** (Acts 5:38-39).

An eighth reason for unanswered prayer is, if the Lord is testing our Faith. Peter tells us our Faith is more precious than gold. It's easy to believe the Lord is with us on sunny days, when we hear His Voice, and see our prayers being answered. But what happens when we don't feel His Presence near us for six months? Or we don't see our prayers being answered for six months? Do we believe He's forsaken us? If we do, our faith is built on the wrong things. It must be built on the Word of God, because everything else will fail. Our faith is precious, because without faith it's *impossible* to please God.

I keep a Prayer Diary, and I've found that 95% of my prayers are answered. The most

common reason I've found for them not being answered, is because the timing is wrong. I've run ahead of the Lord, and asked for something before its time, but generally they are answered. If we have faith to buy a loaf of bread, and feed it to our family, trusting the manufacturers that they haven't put rat poison in it, then we have enough Faith to trust the Lord for anything He has promised us in the Bible.

And, like the man pushing the wheelbarrow over Niagara Falls, if you tell the Lord you believe and trust Him, get in the wheelbarrow, and *prove* you trust Him. Amen!

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Ed.D.