



Lesson 68

Lesson 67: What Is Faith? (Part 24)

Fruit/Testing of Real Faith

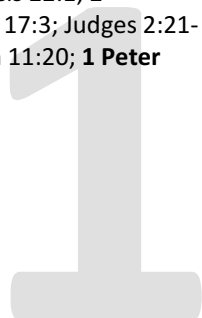
Scripture: Hebrews 11:33-40

FAITH: It Is ALL God!

- It is a GIFT of God! (Ephesians 2:8)
 - All do not have faith (2 Thess. 3:2) because God does **not** give faith to all.
- It is SUSTAINED by God! It is **absolutely dependent** on God.
 - Faith is NO DIFFERENT than life itself which is also **absolutely dependent** on God.
- It is INCREASED by God! This is confirmed in the disciples request, "**LORD, increase our faith.**"
- True Christians realize how much they **need** God **daily – hourly**.
- "Sometimes those who have the most faith feel they have very little, if any at all; while sometimes those who have little, say they are rich and increased with goods."
- What can we do to increase our faith? – Faith is increased by **knowledge!** As knowledge increases, faith increases.
 - Psalm 94:12; Deut 32:10

God Is a Testing God

- **FAITH GROWS THROUGH TESTING! GOD IS A TESTING GOD!** (Exodus 15:25-26; 16:4; Deuteronomy 8:1-3, 16; **13:3**, Genesis 22:1; 2 Chronicles 32:31; Psalm 81:7; 66:10; 17:3; Proverbs 17:3; Judges 2:21-22; 3:1-4; Psalm 105:19; Ecclesiastes 3:18; Jeremiah 11:20; **1 Peter 1:7**; 1 Corinthians 10:13)



Nine Fruits of Real Faith (vv. 33-34)

“Subdued kingdoms”



- “Who” refers us back to verse 32 and will help us with the historical reference.
- “subdue” is καταγωνίζομαι katagonizomai {kat-ag-o-nid'-zom-ah-ee}
 - It means “to struggle against”; “to fight or contend with”; “to enter into a trial of strength”; “to prevail in battle”
- The historical allusion is probably the battles of Joshua and David.
- The walk of faith is a walk (life) that includes **many** battles against the flesh, the world, and the devil.
- Acts 14:22 tells us that we enter the kingdom of heaven through many tribulations!
- **We must subdue temptations daily!** (See 1 Cor. 9:27; Romans 6:19; James 4:4; Matthew 6:13; **26:41**)
- **BUT** by faith we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us! (Philippians 4:13; 1 John 5:4)

“Worked Righteousness”



- This probably has to do with the rule of David (and Joshua).
- The phrase can also mean “to execute justice” which implies ruling in righteousness.
- For us, this would mean living a life of righteousness or living a holy life.
- **RIGHTEOUSNESS** means *walking* in accordance to God's standard or His Word.
- **NOTE THE ORDER!** Before we can live righteous lives, we must “subdue” any unrighteousness. First, we must **HATE** evil before we can **LOVE** good. (Amos 5:15); self must be **DENIED** before Christ can be **FOLLOWED** (Matthew 16:24); the **OLD** man must be **PUT OFF** before the **NEW** man can be **PUT ON** (Ephesians 4:22-24)

“Obtained Promises”



- Joshua was **promised** the defeat of the Canaanites; Gideon was **promised** the defeat of the Midianites; David was **promised** to be king over all Israel.
- **BUT** there were many obstacles in the way of the promises!
- **By faith** these men overcame these obstacles and obtained the promise!
- **NOTE THE ORDER!** First, the **flesh** must be “subdued” and we must be walking in righteousness (according to God's Word), before we can expect to “obtain the promise”. See Hebrews 6:12, 15; Romans 2:7.



“Stopped the mouths of lions”

- The historical allusion certainly is Daniel in the lions’ den in Daniel 6:23.
- Daniel would not **compromise** by the threats of lions!!!
- By faith, we can say, “I will trust and not be afraid!” (See Isaiah 12:2; Psalm 56:11; Isaiah 12:2)
- There are **ferocious** animals and there are **ferocious** people.

- (1 Peter 5:8) “The devil, as a roaming lion, walks about, seeking whom he many devour.”
- Faith lays hold of the **Almighty GOD!**



“Quenched the violence of fire”

- The historical allusion is certainly the three Hebrews in Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace! (Daniel 3:16-18)
- Faith **rests** upon the power of God in the face of great danger.
- These three men were determined to “subdue” the temptation of **compromise** and to “**work righteousness**” **no matter the cost!**
- They put their lives into the hands of a sovereign God and trusted that He would do **whatever** would bring Him the most glory.
- If we **walk** or **live** by faith we can also be at peace to **die** in faith.
- (Ephesians 6:16) The fiery darts of the devil are quenched by taking up the “shield of **faith**”.
- Our faith is strengthened or purified “by fire” – 1 Peter 1:7.
- We now know how martyrs **sang** as the flames of their fires consumed them!



“Escaped the Edge of the Sword”

- Literally, “escape” means “to flee”; or “to run away”
- The word “edge” is PLURAL and should read “edges”.
- We are reminded of Hebrews 4:12, “the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”
- A Christian *escapes* the “Sword” by “subduing” the flesh; living or walking in righteousness (according to the word of God).



“Out of Weakness Were Made Strong”

- “The secret of the Christian’s strength lies in maintaining a consciousness of his weakness.” (AWP) 2 Corinthians 12:10.
- “Self-sufficiency” kills faith.
- “The fact is that the oldest Christian has no more strength *in himself* than he had when he was a “babe in Christ.” AWP

- We need God every minute of the day! Without Christ I can do **NOTHING!** (John 15:5; Philippians 4:13)



“Waxed Valiant in Fight”

- Many historical allusion can be recalled: David (1 Samuel 17); King Abijah (2 Chronicles 13); King Asa (2 Chronicles 14); King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20); King Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 32)
- **The life of faith is a FIGHT!** Paul said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)
- He tells young Timothy, “Fight the good fight of faith.” (1 Tim. 6:12)
- Jeremiah 9:3; Romans 1:16; Jude 3; Revelation 12:11; Acts 7:51-52
- **NOTICE THE ORDER!** One can only fight the good fight of faith when he/she has acknowledged his/her weakness!



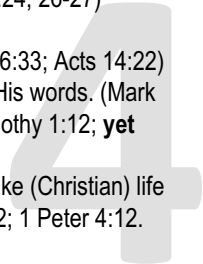
“Turned to Flight the Foreign Armies”

- See Joshua 10:1-10; 2 Samuel 5:17-25; 2 Kings 7:6
- See God’s promises: Leviticus 26:7-8; Deuteronomy 28:7; 32:30; Joshua 23:10; Psalm 91:7.
- **NOTICE THE ORDER!!** Before we can expect **great** victories, there is an *order* to practice!!

“Lord, Increase our faith!”

Biblical Faith and Persecution

- Living, biblical, real faith always leads to TESTING.
- A faith that is NOT tested is NOT REAL faith.
- The Author and Finisher of our Faith made it clear in His teachings:
 - ① “Count the cost”. (Luke 14:28)
 - ② Picking up one’s cross daily was mandatory. (Luke 9:23)
 - ③ His followers would be persecuted just as He was. (John 15:20)
 - ④ Lovers of themselves would lose everything. (Luke 14:24, 26-27)
 - ⑤ Save your life lose your soul! (Matthew 16:25-26)
 - ⑥ We would have many tribulations in the world. (John 16:33; Acts 14:22)
 - ⑦ He would be ashamed of anyone ashamed of Him or His words. (Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; **contrast with** Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:12; **yet** Philippians 1:20)
- The New Testament is **full** of warnings of what a real Christlike (Christian) life would bring persecution – see Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12.
- **BE NOT DISCOURAGED BUT ENCOURAGED!**



- **Faith that is GOD GIVEN and NOT NATURAL:**
 - ① Perseveres until the end.
 - ② Enables its recipient to accomplish great things.
 - ③ Enables its recipient to withstand the greatest trials.
 - ④ WORKS! OBEYS!
- **Biblical faith in times of DANGER, TRIALS, and PERSECUTIONS recognizes that:**
 - ① GOD is ALMIGHTY and reigning on His throne. (Revelation 19:6)
 - ② EVERYTHING that comes into our lives is ORDERED by our FATHER. (Job 1:12; 2:6; Luke 22:31; 1 Peter 4:19; 2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 139:16)
 - ③ All the evil will ultimately turn out for **OUR GOOD**. (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20)
 - ④ The promises of God in the times of testing. (Isaiah 43:2; 41:10; 2 Cor 12:9-10)
 - ⑤ That we are to look away from the present circumstances unto the One Who gives **perfect peace** in the midst of trials. (Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Hebrews 11:25-26)
 - ⑥ Remembering that suffering for His name sake brings a great reward! (Matthew 5:11-12; 1 Peter 4:13-14)
 - ⑦ Remembering that suffering is as much a part of Christianity as believing is! (See Philippians 1:29; Matthew 5:12)

The Great Trials of Faith (vv. 35-38)

- “women received their dead raised back to life” – these woman **had to suffer the loss** before receiving them back!! (See 1 Kings 17:22-24; 2 Kings 4:35-37)
- “others were tortured (racked or “drummed”), not accepting deliverance (redemption)”
 - They were **offered** “deliverance” for their **apostasy!**
 - **THE REAL TEST:** What did these **OT** saints esteem more highly – their bodies or their souls? (See Matthew 16:26)
 - The “**better resurrection**” was the resurrection from the dead – they had been offered “a resurrection” from torture but refused it for a “better resurrection.”
 - The **QUESTION for US:** What do we esteem more – our bodies or our souls? ***Our actions answer the question for us – which of these two things get most of our attention!!!?***
 - These saints were **VALIANT for the TRUTH**. See Jeremiah 9:23.
 - These saints **had** or **owned** TRUTH and they were not about to **sell** it! (Proverbs 23:23)
 - These saints **LOVED NOT THEIR OWN LIVES!** (See Revelation 12:11; Luke 14:26; Acts 20:24; 21:13)

- “others had trial of mockings and scourgings, and of chains and imprisonments”
 - “mocking” – the **mildest** form of persecution – yet **feared** by many today!!
(See 2 Chronicles 36:16; Jeremiah 20:7; Lamentation 3:14)
 - **IF WE ARE NOT BEING MOCKED OR LAUGHED AT IT IS BECAUSE OUR WAYS ARE TOO WORLDLY!**
 - “scourgings” or “whippings” – the Lord Jesus set an example for us (Matthew 27:26 with 1 Peter 2:21-23 [also see Psalm 38:12-14])
 - “bonds and imprisonments”
 - These were saved for murders, insurrectionists, and robbers.
 - Prisons during the OT times were nothing compared to prisons of today!! (Read Jeremiah 38:11-13)
 - “they were stoned” – See Acts 8:1 and Stephen the first martyr!
 - “they were sawn asunder” – Tradition says that Isaiah met his death in this manner – as well did others by what this verse says!
 - “they were **tempted**”
 - ① Tempted by their persecutors with promises of release, riches, promotions.
 - ② Tempted by whispers of doubt of their God into their ears.
 - “they were slain with the sword”
 - The sword of violence and the sword of **injustice**.
 - “they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented”
 - forced to escape their own homes!
 - shared life with wild animals
 - any given day they could be harassed by strangers, robbers, etc.
 - “destitute” – deprived of the ordinary necessities of life – denied help from friends and relatives.
 - **“of whom the world was not worthy”**
 - There is a **big** difference in what God thinks of His faithful saints and what the world thinks. See Psalm 16:3
 - The faithful are the SALT of the earth – preserving it from the outpouring of God’s wrath.
 - “they wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth”
 - “These saints of God were safer among the beasts of the field than in the religious world inflamed by the Devil.” AWP

ALL THESE . . . (v. 39; Hebrews 11:13)

- “all these” were **Old Testament** saints!! – **YET they persevered!!**



