

More Faith

Acts 3: 11-16

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Intro

In Acts chapter three, we see the first miracle of the new church age. Peter and John are on the way to the temple to pray when they come upon a man lame from birth. When he sees the men, he began asking for alms, Peter responded by saying, “Silver and gold, I do not have, but what I have I give to you freely.” He then took him by the hand and the man was healed.

The man began walking and leaping and praising God as they were entering the temple and the crowd started to look at Peter and John as if they had magical powers. ***What they had was faith.***

Faith is such an important thing to understand. Jesus said that if you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain move from here to there.”

Faith is something God wants us to have and something we want to have, but how do we get more faith? **That is a great mystery for many people and wrongly considered by many others.**

In these verses, we will discover the keys to having and obtaining more faith.

I. Faith Does Not Come From Men

A. Many try to appropriate faith

- There is a part of Christianity that believes and teaches that if are sick, do not have enough money, or are otherwise unblessed, then the fault lies with you.
- You don't have enough faith.
- But when I ask them how someone gets this faith, in other words, how is faith appropriated, I have yet to receive a good answer.

Illus – It reminds us of the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel.

1 Kings 18:28-29, “So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them. When midday was past, they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.”

- Many try to appropriate faith through harder prayers, chanting, or hurting the body.
- B. It's not from our power of piety
- Peter, made it clear, however, that the miracle was not done by their power or their piety.
 - Many people assume that the power of faith is theirs. They are powerful people because of their piety, their holiness, and they draw attention to themselves.

Illus – There was a tent revivalist nearby a few years ago that would begin his meetings with a long session of boasting about what he could do.

- Peter made it clear in Acts 3:12 that the man was not healed by their power, or their holiness.
- This is also written by Paul to the church in Corinth.

2 Corinthians 3:4-5, “Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,”

II. Faith Comes From God

- Peter made it clear in verse 16 where faith comes from. “Faith comes through Him.”

A. Faith comes by hearing

- Paul gives us the answer specifically in the book of Romans.

Romans 10:14, 17 “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? ...So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

- What we hear, then, becomes very important to our faith. Jesus told us to be careful in what we hear.

Mark 4:23-24, “If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. And He was saying to them, ‘Take care what you listen to.’”

Illus – Some religions believe that in order to reach Nirvana you must empty your mind of all thoughts and then you can become one with the great ‘nothingness.’

God says just the opposite, fill you heart and your mind with the Word of God and you will be changed.

- Faith comes by hearing and ...

B. Hearing comes by the Word of Christ

- When you receive the Word of God, you are receiving more than just words; Jesus is Himself the Word of God.
- Therefore, when you hear the Word of God you are receiving Jesus; He is the Word of God.
- John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
- John also made it clear that abiding in the Word of God is what makes us free.

John 8:31-32, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

- His Word is powerful...

Jeremiah 23:29, “Is not My word like fire?” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock?”

C. “Be filled with the Holy Spirit”

- God also dwells in us by the Holy Spirit, that’s the key to faith. It comes from God and so it’s vital to understand how God is in us and with us.
- When Peter did this miracle, he was filled with the Holy Spirit.
- This was the key to the power of the early church.

Acts 13:52, “And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

- We are told to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is what brings change in our lives.

Ephesians 5:18-20, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;”

- He is the “Spirit of Truth.”

III. God Expects Us to Live By Faith

- Faith comes from God and He holds us accountable to live by the faith we receive from Him.

A. The Righteous will live by faith

- To live by faith is to live by your relationship to the Lord.

Galatians 2:20-21, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

Hebrews 10:35-36, “Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward...My righteous one shall live by faith;”

B. Live by great faith

- Throughout scripture we can see that there are different kinds of faith.
- There is dead faith, little faith and great faith.
- When Jesus walked with the disciples, He corrected them for not having more faith.

Matthew 8:26, He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?” Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm.

C. Do everything by faith

- In fact, God tells us that we should do everything by faith, and that if we do anything outside of faith, to us it is a sin.

Romans 14:22-23, “The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.”

Conclusion

God wants us to have faith, the faith that comes from Him. Open your heart to receive His Word and His Holy Spirit and you will grow in faith; but have great faith.