

Faith ■ The Gift Of God

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith as a gift from God, highlighting that without faith, it is impossible to please God. It discusses how faith originates from God and is not based on human effort, stressing the need to believe in the word of God to activate faith. The sermon uses examples from the lives of biblical figures like Moses, Elijah, and Paul to illustrate how faith overcomes fear and doubts, urging believers to trust in God's promises and step out in faith despite challenges.

Scripture: Hebrews 11:6, Ephesians 2:8, Romans 10:17, James 5:17, Philippians 4:6, Acts 16:25, 2 Timothy 1:7

Topics: "Faith as a Gift", "Trusting God's Promises"

Description

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Transcript

Praise God, let's come to this first lesson of the faith series. And it's a wonderful series. This message, faith, the gift of God.

Reading from Hebrews chapter 11 verse 6. But without faith it is impossible to please God. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8. For by grace are you saved through faith and not of yourself, it is the gift of God. Romans chapter 10 verse 17.

Sorry, go ahead. Romans 10 17. So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

As we come to this message, faith, the gift of God. Faith is a most important attribute. In Hebrews chapter 11 verse 6 that we just read.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Now that can be very frustrating to those that cannot make the promises of God work. They say they believe the word of God, they pray the promises but nothing happens.

Now the first question to settle is this. The Bible is the word of God. To appropriate the promises of God is a matter of faith.

And faith doesn't work on any other ground. Then this ground of faith where you believe the word of God. Without the word of God there is no faith.

Notice in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8. Faith is the gift of God. Again in Romans 10 17. We are told that faith cometh.

Faith is a gift. It doesn't have its source within us. But it initially comes from without.

These two statements move faith out of the realm of the ordinary. The faith that saves you is not the faith that gets you out of bed in the morning. Bible teachers use that as an example but they're totally wrong.

That is not the faith of God. The faith of God is supernatural. It has its source in God himself.

Ephesians 2 verse 8. By grace are you saved through faith. That means if you're truly born again you do have faith. It was that faith that saved you.

It was through that faith that you are filled with the Holy Spirit. And it is that same faith that was in the heart of every single man or woman in the Bible. And you've got to settle this.

There is no difference between the faith in your heart this morning. Than in the faith of Abraham, Moses and Paul. Peter, John or Elijah.

That faith of me is exactly the same. Because all true faith has its source in God. It is a gift from God.

What a comfort to know that this faith is not just your faith. James in the New Testament spoke this about Elijah. He said Elijah was a man of like passions just like you.

Faith is not some mystical something that floats down from the sky. It's not a thing tied into your emotions. But you have to stir up in an exciting meeting.

Neither is it something that you can see with the eye. Faith is what a man believes. It is believing that God is.

Just find the people who believe that God is. And you will find them diligently seeking God. You have found real faith.

Now this knowledge of faith has to be recovered in the church again. In this terrible apostate and erroneous thinking of the faith movement where these famous preachers make faith something they can manipulate God with. They teach that you just have to quote scripture.

And God is obliged to do what they say. All over the church we have people decreeing things telling God what to do. But this morning what we're dealing with has to be brought in line with what the Bible says.

We're going to redefine faith according to the Bible. Now I think all of us have come to believe that those in the Bible had a different kind of faith than us. We read the stories of the Bible and we think they were a different kind of man and woman.

But James in the New Testament dispels that as a lie. He said Elijah was a man of like passions just like you. Elijah had the same fears.

The very same doubts. The same frustrations that I have. When my alarm went this morning early the first thing my mind said was five more minutes.

I know none of you think like that. But that's what my mind is like. Be assured we're all the same.

If you think you're disqualified because fears arise in your heart you're mistaken. Elijah was born of a woman. He was flesh and blood just like you.

He had an old nature just like yours. And the same doubts arose in his mind. Elijah had all the possibilities to be an absolute failure.

Yet through faith he rose up to be a man of God. His faith was the same as your faith. The same faith of all those that are born again of God.

So many in the church have big dreams and plans. But they never go anywhere because of the fears in their hearts. They won't go to the high street and evangelize.

They won't step out into ministry. They won't go preach because of fear. That's a choice.

To believe that God has called you but to stay where you are is the flesh. Now the second call of Moses at the burning bush is a very interesting time for this lesson. Moses felt the call of God 40 years before this in Egypt.

He was a man in Egypt mighty in word and deed. He felt the call of God in his heart to deliver the people of Israel. But he only managed to kill an Egyptian, bury him in the sand and then run for his life.

For 40 years he was in the wilderness thinking he was a failure. Then God met him at the burning bush. It was a bush burning and yet it didn't burn.

And he turned aside to see this mystery. And God spoke to him out of the bush saying take your shoes off your feet. This is holy ground.

Do you know what he was saying to Moses? I'm going to make you like this bush. You'll burn with fire and yet not burn up. God said I've heard the cry of my people in Egypt.

And I'm sending you to deliver them. This is now 40 years later when God is saying this to him. What is his response now? Who am I to deliver these people? That's exactly what you and I would have said.

Fear arose in the heart of Moses. He looked at his inability. Three million Jewish slaves locked into the mightiest empire on earth.

And here is God telling this lonely shepherd on the hillside that he is going to deliver them. I promise you if you don't get scared of that there's something wrong with you. Moses said I cannot do this thing.

And as he stood on that desert floor the word of God came with power. Threw down your rod. It became a snake.

Pick up the rod. And it became a stick again. He gave Moses the promise I am.

And he sent him to Egypt. Moses had to make a decision to obey the word of God. At that burning bush as God spoke to him Moses' faith grew bigger than his fear.

He believed that God is. For real faith we've got to pray through regularly in the presence of God. And not place of prayer.

Fear becomes faith. And we've got to return again and again to the altar of prayer. And that's chapter two.

They prayed through and were filled with the Holy Ghost. And that's chapter four. The same people are back in a prayer making praying to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Faith is really there in the heart of a believer. But many times we become so dominated by that old nature. That faith becomes dormant.

When that happens. Fear begins to override our faith. And the only way to break that is to pray through and touch God again.

And in the presence of God again we see that God is. Well Moses did go to Egypt. But every step of the way with that old donkey.

His rod in his hand. And a brother that's going to keep backsliding. He made that journey down to Pharaoh.

As he walked the devil reminded him that he couldn't do this thing. Forty years ago he is a wanted man in Egypt. They will kill him if they get him.

The devil began to speak and whisper in his ear just like he does with you. This is the great mistake you and I make. We think Moses marched down there filled with faith without any doubts.

But Moses felt what every Christian feels when they follow the call of God. When we move out into that place of faith. Beyond what we can see.

I promise you fears will arise. Yet he never turned back. That's the difference between him and us.

He had the same fears. He had the same doubts. But he kept going towards Egypt.

Once God has spoken to you it's time to act. There is a time when it becomes unbelief to go back to prayer. When God has told you to go and do a thing it's not time to fast about it.

Every step that Moses took towards Egypt. There were thoughts arose out of that old nature. Moses you cannot do this.

He heard that as strong as you do. But he never turned back. Moses went on in spite of his fears.

And he was going to see the glory of God. When he went down into Egypt and began to perform those miracles. When the lice came on that day.

And the plague of the flies. When he got back to his bedroom that night. That flesh again rose up and said that was just you.

This was going to happen anyway. There was no miracle in what happened today. How do I know that he felt this? Because it's just like you and I. Every morning when he got out of bed.

He began to think I can't face Pharaoh again today. The same fears and the same doubts. When you face impossible situations.

When you hear and feel the call of God in your heart. You will face these same fears. The difference between faith and unbelief.

Is not coming to a place where you have no fears. You will never get there. It doesn't matter what the smart preachers tell you.

When you face the impossible. When you face the unknown. You will face this battle within you.

Faith goes on in spite of fears and doubts. The fear will be there. But you must stand in faith.

Any preacher who says any different is a liar. All these American preachers. Who preach the faith message.

Never once do they confess that they've had these fears. If you listen to them you'd think they haven't feared in 40 years. I want to tell you that's not reality.

The greatest men and women in church history have had fears. But they kept serving God. Faith always stands up on the side of God.

This truth that I'm preaching to you. Changed my way of looking at faith. Just like you I used to think that faith was the absence of all unbelief and fear.

I thought the people in the bible had a special revelation. And that it was impossible for them not to believe. But that is not true.

When you're facing the mountain you can't get over. You know God is able but you're afraid. You're in very good company.

Everyone who has walked this way has come the same path. Look at Elijah that great prophet. They prophesied it isn't going to rain for three and a half years.

That's what Elijah told King Ahab. According to my word there's not going to be any rain. I do know what Elijah felt like.

When he was on his way to deliver that message to Ahab. That natural mind of his. Was telling him you're going to get in there and prophesy that.

And before you get out of the palace. There's going to come a flood of rain on the ground. How do I know that? Because James in the new testament says that Elijah was a man of like passions.

And I also know the nature of the devil. Satan whispered in Elijah's ear. You better go back to that cave and pray for another year.

You're going to make the greatest mistake of your life. Nothing is going to happen. Do you know seven years ago when we planted this church in Limerick.

Every single day for one year. The devil spoke to me very clearly. He said you're a fool.

You're deceived. You're making a great mistake. All of these doors to different countries open for you to go preach.

And here you are starting a new church with six people. You're going to die and there's only going to be 10 people in this church when you finish. I had to walk through that.

Elijah refused to listen to his fears. They were there and they were very real. But he chose to listen to God.

There are two forces working here. God and the devil. God has not given us the spirit of fear.

But that doesn't mean that there is not fear in that old creation. God speaks to you. You believe it.

Then here comes the fear. The opposition. What are you going to believe? Do you remember the man with the withered arm who came to Jesus? Jesus looked at the man and he said stretch forth your hand.

As he is hearing the words of Jesus in this ear, here comes the devil whispering in this other ear. You can't do that. You've never done that.

This thing is impossible. This man is faced with a choice. And what he chooses to believe will determine the outcome.

You're not going to be neutral. You're going to listen to one of those two voices. Thank God that man stretched forth his hand.

And it was immediately healed. How many have left church meetings in unbelief saying I knew God wouldn't heal me. 20 years ago we ran the first school in Belfast, School of Christ in Belfast.

Brother Clendenin ran it for two weeks and then I ran it for two weeks. This was my first school. I told everybody at the end of the school I'm going off to take the School of Christ to Britain.

I knew that was the will of God. After four weeks of that school in Belfast, everybody was talking about School of Christ. I went to church on the Sunday and they were all saying goodbye to me.

My car was packed with all of the manuals. I told my mother Monday morning I'm getting the ferry to Scotland. What nobody knew was I had no money.

I didn't even have a hundred euro. It was a hundred and five euro for that ferry. I just knew Sunday night somebody is gonna hear from God and give me a gift.

I knew it was God's will to get on that ferry and go to Scotland. I drove away from the church that night without any money. I never made my needs known to one person.

Monday morning I went to a prayer meeting and it was halfway between my mother's house and the ferry port. And after I came out of that prayer meeting I went still no money. I got in the car and I'm thinking what am I gonna do? Am I a fool? But I started that car and said I'm going to that ferry port.

As I drove out the roadway a man ran out of the church waving at me. He handed me an envelope and when I got around the corner I stopped my car and opened the envelope. And after I got around the corner I stopped my car and opened the envelope.

One hundred and five euro was in it. Just enough to take that ferry to Scotland. I don't have much fuel in the car and I don't have any money.

All the devil is telling me you are a fool. You're gonna run out of fuel. You'll be in the center of Glasgow city.

All the fear was coming on me. Do you know what I've done? I stopped the car. And I said devil I want you to listen to me.

If I'm in the center of Glasgow city and I run out of fuel the first thing I'm gonna do is get out of my car. Stand up and I'm gonna preach the gospel. And I said you know I'm gonna do this.

I promised God. I promised the devil and I promised myself. And I got a victory over that flesh.

Friends I'm telling you these are the things we face every single day. And you are gonna have to get the victory over these things. Can you say it again please? You are gonna have to get the victory over these things.

At Philippi when Paul and Silas were thrown in the prison their backs were cut and bleeding. And they had the same fears as you and I. I can imagine what that flesh was telling them to feel like. But near midnight faith arose in Paul's heart.

He turned to Silas and said I think we need to begin singing. And as they began to praise God an earthquake come that night. And revival came to that prison cell.

We do have the same faith as these men and women of the bible. And the same fears were in Moses heart. As well as the same fears.

Saints I want to tell you there's a way to walk with God. And I can give you a thousand testimonies of what it means to walk by faith. Faith is a gift from God.

In Jesus name. Let's lift our hands here and pray to the Lord.

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