

By Faith, Faith = Action

by Leroy Yoder

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in pleasing God, drawing examples from biblical accounts of individuals who demonstrated unwavering faith in Jesus and were rewarded for their belief. It highlights the necessity of faith in taking action and receiving God's blessings, showcasing how faith leads to miraculous interventions and forgiveness. The message encourages listeners to have childlike faith, trust in God's promises, and persevere in their spiritual journey despite challenges and trials.

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Scripture: Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:6, Matthew 8:1, Matthew 8:5, Matthew 9:27, Luke 8:43, Luke 7:36, Hebrews 11:29, Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Faith", "Perseverance in Trials"

Description

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Transcript

Good morning. Good morning. I'm just going to greet you with the words of John this morning.

From John to the Church in Southwest Missouri. Grace to you and peace from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priest, serving his God and Father.

To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Look, he is coming with the clouds.

Every eye will see him, even those who pierced him. And on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be.

Amen. I am the Alpha, the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. O God in heaven, we come before you this morning with thankful hearts.

We thank you for another day. Mercies and patience which are new every morning. We thank you for this opportunity to gather.

We ask that you would be with us in our midst, help us as we communicate together, help us to grow, help us to learn, to love you more. We thank you. We ask for your presence here with us as we continue throughout the day, reading out of your word.

Help us to learn what we need to learn. Thank you. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. If you want to turn to Hebrews 11. We'll start here, maybe end here later.

So verse 1, Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

And then, by faith able, by faith eno, I'm not going to read the whole thing. Go to verse 6. And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. If we just think about that verse.

Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists. That's the first, what do you call it, a requisite, prerequisite. I mean, without a belief, without faith, there will be no action.

If I tell Harvey his house is on fire, if he has no belief or faith, then what I'm telling him, he won't move. Right? Anyway, so without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. I'm going to stop there.

I'm just going to read a few accounts in the Gospels, not nearly all of them, but a few of people that came to Jesus and were rewarded for their faith, which was what I started out doing. I just thought of this verse. So I went to here and then I didn't know for sure where to stop when I went into Hebrews 11 and 12 and so on.

Let's see here. Matthew 8, verse 1. When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.

So here we see a leper despised of society, if I understand correctly, from that time. Unclean, had to stay away from people. But he had faith that this man that he had heard about, maybe seen, could make him whole.

So he did something about it. There was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean. He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, I do choose, you may clean.

Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Then Jesus said to him, see that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded as a testimony to them. And if anyone has any thoughts about these incidences or whatever that I'm reading, just feel free to butt in and share.

Or just have your own thoughts about how you think this worked out. Think about how these people had lived and how they are coming to Christ. Verse 5, when he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him appealing to him, saying, Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed in terrible distress.

The account in Luke says that he sent the elders of the Jews to Jesus, and they said he is worthy because he has builded us a synagogue. But then part of the rest of the story, like the thing this centurion then says later, is the same in both accounts. Anyway, and he said to him, I will come and cure him.

The centurion answered, Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only speak the word and my servant will be healed. This is the part that's the same, like in the other account, after he gets closer, the centurion comes out or sends word to him. I think he sends word, like he sends someone else in Luke's account to say that I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof.

But then it goes on. So here was a man, one thing I thought of when I read through this again, okay, so here's a centurion, a man in power, and this is his servant. But this man had compassion, even though it was a servant.

This man was important to, like it was another human being, and he had compassion on him, and here again, he knew of this man Jesus, and he had faith. He did something about it for his servant. And he said to him, I will come and cure him.

The centurion answered, Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only speak the word and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me, and I say to one, go, and he goes, and to another, come, and he comes, and to my slave, do this, and the slave does it. But here the man's just saying, I know how power works, I'm a man in authority, and I've got people under me, and I tell them, do this, come, go, and they obey.

And I know you're in authority over these things, and you can do it. When Jesus heard him, he was amazed, and he said to those who followed him, Truly, I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west, and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And to the centurion Jesus said, Go, let it be done for you according to your faith. And the servant was healed in that hour. We'll go down to chapter 9, verse 27.

Here we have two blind men putting in an effort. As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, Have mercy on us, son of David! When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They said to him, Yes, Lord. Then he touched their eyes and said, According to your faith, let it be done to you.

And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly ordered them, See that no one knows of this. But they went away, and they spread the news about him throughout that district.

And in all of these accounts, we could probably say the same thing. Like I was just thinking when I was reading this, there were probably other blind people in these countries and around about, and not all of the blind people got healed. So some of them didn't have faith.

They didn't have a belief that this man they had heard about or not a big enough faith to produce any actions of coming to the man and asking for their sight, as these two did. And the same could probably be said of any of the other accounts. There were probably other centurions that had six servants, all of the miracles and things that we read about, the ones that I'm not reading about, but just the ones that we know of.

We could think of all the other people that probably had the same ailments, and they didn't get healed, but we don't really have any that came to Jesus and said, I want to be healed, and then he said, or you're not worthy. You've come in faith, but I've decided not to heal you. Or I can't think of any.

Someone else can direct me. Luke, chapter 8. Luke, chapter 8, verse 43. So I'm just picking out this one account.

I guess it's within another account, but the other account is of a leader of a synagogue. They come to him asking for help for his dying daughter, so I guess we could just read the whole thing. Why don't we start at 40.

Now, when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about 12 years old, who was dying.

Then as he went, the crowds pressed in on him. As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. Now, there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for 12 years, and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her.

She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, Who touched me? When all denied it, Peter said, Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you. Like, there's a lot of people touching me.

What do you mean, who touched me? But Jesus said, Someone touched me, for I noticed that power had gone out from me. When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling and falling down before him. She declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.

And he said to her, Daughter, Your faith has made you well. Go in peace. And what started my whole thinking of relating some of these is, I've been reading just a separate book that was, that had talked about this woman, and then it just mentioned a little phrase at the bottom, like, Today, this idea of, like, so many people are thronging Jesus, like even the author seemed to imply, like, Okay, even today it works that way.

There's so many people thronging Jesus, but how many are actually, you know, reaching out in faith and touching him? I mean, there were more people touching him in this account. I mean, they were thronging about him. Like, where are we in this? Where am I? Anyway, we can go on.

Verse 49. While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader's house to say, Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher any longer.

When Jesus heard this, he replied, Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved. When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father

and mother.

They were all weeping and wailing for her, but he said, Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping. And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and called out, Child, get up! Her spirit returned, and she got up at once, and he directed them to give her something to eat.

Her parents were astounded, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened. I guess we'll go to Luke 7. I didn't want to spend too much time there. Let's go to Luke 7. This account, not only does it also involve faith, but because we're thinking of gathering tonight, having communion, and foot washing, I thought of this as well.

Luke 7, verse 36. One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, had learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment.

She stood behind him at his feet. Weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears, and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.

Now, when the Pharisee, who had invited him, saw it, he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner. Jesus spoke up and said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. Teacher, he replied, speak.

A certain creditor had two debtors, one owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more? Simon answered, I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt.

And Jesus said to him, you have judged rightly. Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, do you see this woman? I entered your house, and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet.

You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven. Hence, she has shown great love.

But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little. Then he said to her, your sins are forgiven. But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, who is this who even forgives sins? Then he said to the woman, your faith has saved you.

Go in peace. Now let's go back to Hebrews 11. Moses is just going to skim through here a little bit.

So after verse 6, let's read verse 6 again. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. Then we have, by faith, Noah did.

By faith, Abraham did. And I think in the community of change it mentions Sarah later, mine doesn't. By faith, Sarah.

By faith, Abraham did. By faith, Moses. By faith, I didn't finish my business this morning.

I'm skimming through here and just underlining everything. I'm missing them because it's not set up the same as in the King James. Okay, so by faith, Isaac.

By faith, Jacob. In verse 21, 22. By faith, Joseph.

By faith, Moses. By faith, Moses. Verse 29.

By faith, the people passed through the Red Sea. 30. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell.

31. By faith, Rahab did what she did. And what more should I say for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets all did things by faith.

32. Through faith, comfort kingdoms, administer justice, obtain promises, shut the mouths of lions, quench the raging fire, escape the edge of the sword. 33.

Won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 34. By faith, women received their dead by resurrections.

35. Others were tortured, others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment. 36.

They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword. 37. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.

They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the earth. 39. Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

40. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. 41.

Looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. 42. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

43. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood, and you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children. My child, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, or lose heart when you are punished by him.

45. For the Lord disciplines those whom he loves, and he chastises every child whom he accepts. 46.

Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children. For what child is there whom a parent does not discipline? If you do not have that discipline in which all children share, then you are illegitimate and not his children.

47. Moreover, we have human parents to discipline us, and we respect it to them. Should we not be even more willing to be subject to the Father of spirits and live? 48.

For they disciplined us for a short time, as seemed best to them. But he disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share his holiness. Now discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time.

But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore, lift your drooping hands, strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.

See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God, that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and through it many become defiled. See to it that no one becomes like Esau, an immoral and godless person who sold his birthright for a single meal. Let's skip the next part, how he came back and couldn't receive the blessing.

18. You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and bloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words make the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. Verse 22.

But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, to the God, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven. At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, yet once more, I will shape not only the earth, but also the heaven.

This phrase, yet once more, indicates the removal of what is shaken, that is, created things, so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for indeed our God is a consuming fire. Let mutual love continue.

Thoughts, comments, corrections, here please. I appreciate that. It reminded me of a song that we used to sing when you heard it.

Reach out and touch the Lord as he walks by. You'll find he's not too busy to hear your hearts cry. He is passing by this moment.

If you need to supply, reach out and touch the Lord as he walks by. That's really, it really is, I really appreciated the thought how you said how many people today are longing Jesus, but, you know, it's such a large number, but how many people are actually willing to reach out and touch him and have that faith? It's a good thought. Lord bless you.

Amen, Brother Leroy. I appreciate your comments to the tale. You said you couldn't go on.

Wonderful words of life. Yeah, Jesus didn't do many miracles in Galilee because of the unbelief. And the ones, I believe, that were healed had faith.

Many other lepers and blind and crippled and you name it, they weren't healed because, it's not for me, they just lacked faith. I assume that's the one. So it is today with God's goodness too.

The grace of God, the goodness of God. Yeah, he saved Paul, the chief of all sinners, and Manasseh, but he can't save me, I'm just not good enough like Peter. Depart from me, I'm a sinful person.

And how they're putting off the grace of God and the faith that's saved. And I think Brother Daniel said to me this morning, in a prayer meeting this morning, he asked about Polycarp, when they were burning Polycarp, that's how he died, the stakes on fire. And he says, I'm not afraid of the fire, this temporary fire, but you should be afraid of the fire that burns forever and ever.

Am I quoting him right? Who made Polycarp to me this morning? One of the brothers made Polycarp to me this morning, that's a dreamer. But even second-hand faith is good, like the Shunammite woman, with Naaman's wife, there is a prophet, a young maiden, there is a prophet in Israel who could heal your leprosy, and they got him, and they believed him, and then they sent Elijah up to meet Naaman, and then Naaman's servants, right, Naaman, he was in a rage, I'm getting out of here, and the servants said, wait, wait, if he has a great thing, you do it, just do what he says. Faith is a victory, the Lord be magnified.

Thank you brothers for your comments, and thank you Brother Elijah for that, it is very inspiring. I want to re-read everything, I like everything that was read today, especially how in chapter 11 it says, Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, for by the elders obtained a good testimony. It is easy as children to hope for things that they can see, but we are called to hope for things that are not seen, and he repeats sort of the same understanding here, in verse 3, at the end of it, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible, and then later on, Noah is warned, he is divinely warned of something that was coming, that he couldn't probably even imagine, and it condemned the world, but he became an heir of righteousness, because of his faith in doing what God wanted him to do, and then he goes to Abraham, and at the end of verse 10 it says, For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

And there is this Zion in Jerusalem, that really the foundations are made by men, I know that many evangelical groups wait for, what they would call the third temple, I suppose, to be put together, maybe to call on their Messiah, to force his coming, I guess, or whatever. But really we are supposed to be waiting for a city that's builder, is not man, but is God. And you know, I could go on and on, all these people, that's what this faith is defined as, they couldn't tangibly hold it, they couldn't see it, but they believed it.

And yeah, may we all just have that childlike faith in God. I wasn't planning on sharing, but I had this thought that kept penetrating, and it was a blessing, thank you, brother, I appreciate that. I really like how you put faith, and kind of bringing it to other analogies, where somebody doesn't take action if there is no faith.

And I think often, especially in mainstream Christianity, and we talked about this before, faith is the thing that really gets pushed, it's, you know, Ephesians 2, 8 gets pushed, and really emphasized, but I really like, and it's true, we cannot please God without faith, we're not going to take action without faith. And yet, when we read about judgment, the judgment is always about the works that we have, and I think sometimes that creates a theological problem, especially if we think that it's only faith. But if we think about the words of James, I'll show you my faith by my works, it really is perfect, the works that will be judged by are really a referendum of the faith that we have or did not have.

And I just, that just came to me while I was thinking about this, hopefully that makes sense. And bless the Lord. And bless the Lord.

God bless the Lord. For by His words of love. To stand by Him.

In the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands. In the holy place.

For Jesus, our Savior, Redeemer, and Lord. The Lord of salvation and flesh of the world. His name shall be wonderful Prince of Peace.

Emmanuel comes again, Lord, I pray. Hallelujah. Oh, Hallelujah.

God's only begotten will pass over them. To witness and believe the angel again. Sweet corners of heaven and dayspring of life.

Our leader and bright truth and truth of life. Hallelujah. Oh, Hallelujah.

The Son of the Highest to hide in the door. The Lion of Judah and God of war. The Root of all Kings, the King of all Kings.

Messiah, Chief Shepherd and Heir of all Kings. Hallelujah. Oh, Hallelujah.

The God in whom we extend your light of the world. The Head of the Church and we are one with the Lord. The Alpha, the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Desire of all nations are on the other end. Hallelujah. Oh, Hallelujah.

To say that I'm walking toward home. The night is so dark and I'm lonely. I'm losing my vision to the light.

And then the watchman gave his reply. Morning will come, but it is still nigh. Every hour I'll stand to listen.

The day of Christ is nigh. Watchman, how long shall the night be? This earth is not a home I can be. And I am so sick for glory.

The place where I'm moving to, to be. And then the watchman gave his reply. Morning will come, but it is still nigh.

Inside is warm, the Fatherland. The day of Christ is nigh. Watchman, how long shall the night be? And when will the day of rest pass? For I am so sick for glory.

The strength that I had is waning fast. And then the watchman gave his reply. Morning will come, but it is still nigh.

And I still want more to strengthen you. The day of Christ is nigh. Watchman, how long shall the night be? Do I have much farther to go? Well, when will my eyes see the brightness? Where love is the only thing we know.

And then the watchman gave his reply. Morning will come, but it is still nigh. Sorrow and pain for you will end.

The day of Christ is nigh. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. Naught be all else to me, Saviour Thou art.

Thou art as dawn, my day, or my night. Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light. Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word.

I ever with Thee, and Thou with me, Lord. Thou my true Father, I Thy true Son. Thou with me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle shield, guard for the fight. Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight. Thou my soul's shelter, Thou my high tower.

Raise Thou me and word, O power of my heart. Precious I Thee have, nor man's empty praise. Thou my inheritance, now and always.

Shelter Thou only, first in my heart. I King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art. I King of Heaven, my victory won.

May I reach Heaven's joyful, bright and sound. Fire of my own heart, Thou there before. Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Think not, child, of strange poor pilgrims. The like not your brethren know. Some are tried with fires of chastening.

Some are tried through floods of woe. Jesus knows our strength and weakness. Understand we are but frail.

Hears us often, will forgive us. Yet we falter if we fail. Take heart then, my weary brother.

Though you suffer shame and loss. Give your brethren light of vision. God is cleansing you from dross.

Fairest brother, think not sister. See the church that's gone before. Though the cross destroy the body.

Yet the soul he will restore. Hear the winter's sounds and cheer us. As we tread the road they trod.

Dare we to say God what made. For I will stay upon my God.

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