

Faith the Reality

by Richard E. Bieber

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of faith in drawing near to God and the joy of pursuing His treasure above all else.

Scripture: Psalm 63:1, Matthew 13:44, Matthew 25:6, Luke 5:10, Luke 12:32, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "True Faith", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Richard E. Bieber emphasizes the importance of having true faith in God, not just religious practices. He illustrates this through the stories of Noah, Abraham, and Peter, who all took bold steps of faith by letting go of the familiar and embracing the unknown to follow God's calling. Bieber challenges the congregation to joyfully abandon distractions and idols in their lives to pursue a deeper relationship with God, comparing it to the priceless treasure hidden in a field that requires everything to obtain. He urges believers to seek God diligently, expect His manifestation, and rid themselves of anything that hinders their faith, emphasizing that faith is a personal journey that no one else can undertake for them.

Transcript

And without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, took heed and constructed an ark for the saving of his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness

which comes by faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews 11:6-10

If we're serious about drawing near to God we have to be careful not to confuse having faith with being religious. To be religious all you have to do is add a few religious trappings to your life -

- go to church - once in a while,
- read the Bible - once in a while,

- repeat some prayers,
- say that you believe in God,
- and you're religious.

To have faith is a very different thing. To have faith you literally let go of your old life and take hold of a new one. Abraham let go of his homeland, launched out into the unknown, and with his heart took hold of a new land he couldn't even see.

Peter let go of his fishing boat and every familiar thing and took hold of Jesus, to sail with Him into unknown waters and become a fisher of men.

"Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men," said Jesus. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Luke 5:10-11

Every man and woman who has ever walked with God has taken this step. They joyfully abandoned the treasure of this world to obtain the treasure of God.

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

Matthew 13:44

Why does the man have to sell all he has and buy the field? Why doesn't he just pick up the treasure and walk off with it?

- Because the treasure isn't sitting there in a neat little box to be picked up and carried off in five minutes.

The treasure is in the form of ore -- it's going to take time and trouble to dig it out. If the man wants the treasure he's going to buy the field. And to buy the field it's going to cost everything he's got. Does this throw him into a quandary? Does he go home to his wife a nervous wreck?

"What's wrong, honey. Why can't you eat your supper?"

"Well, I found this treasure today hidden in a field worth more than you can imagine. But to get it we have to buy the field and it will cost us everything we've got. I'm sick over it! I can't make up my mind!"

There is no conflict in the man's heart.

"...in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys the field."

In his joy he digs at that treasure day after day, year after year, until he has it in the shape it needs to be, until he really has it.

If we haven't come to the place where we're ready to joyfully abandon everything else to walk with God, then we simply haven't seen God's treasure yet.

- We may be religious,

- but we haven't tasted the life of faith.

May God give us, today, a vision of the treasure He has for us - so bright, so clear, that we'll gladly sell everything we have to buy the field.

The treasure is the life of knowing God,

walking with Him,

talking with Him,

living in His will,

loving Him with all our hearts.

Jesus died on the cross to make that kind of life possible to us.

"I am the Way - to God.

I am the Truth - of God.

I am the Life - of God.

Come to me and I will bring you to God."

What do you think it was that caused Peter and the others to forsake everything and follow Jesus? They knew in their bones that this man would bring them into the presence of the living God! They knew it! And when we get a good glimpse of Jesus we know it too. This man, Jesus, is the treasure for whom it's worth forsaking everything.

Moreover, Jesus not only opened the way to the Father with His death so we could go to heaven in the same way, He pours out the Holy Spirit upon us to quicken us, enlighten us, so we can walk the way of God on this earth. He pours out the Holy Spirit on us afresh this hour!

Jesus opens the way.

Jesus gives the Spirit, but there is one thing we have to do: we have to have faith.

Not just be religious, but have faith.

1. To have faith is to dare to believe that God is there.

And without faith it's impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near

to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

Believe that He exists. Not that He exists theoretically, but that He exists concretely. That He is here to help us, save us, and love us.

"Oh, how I wish I could believe that," people say. "I want to believe in God.

I envy people who do, but I can't! What can I do about this?"

Start looking at Jesus. That much you can do. Just look at Him!

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

"Look unto him and be saved all the ends of the earth!"

You want to know that God is there?

- Look at Jesus healing the sick,

- and see God.

- Look at Jesus forgiving the sinner,

- and see God.

- Look at Jesus feeding the hungry,

- and see God.

- Look at Jesus opening the eyes of the blind,

- and see God,

and draw near to this God who is nothing but good!

Before you know it you will begin to know that God is there. You will know it. He's there waiting for you to draw near.

2. To have faith is to expect God to manifest Himself to you as you search for Him.

...For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Jesus teaches this over and over -

- ask and you shall receive,

- seek and you shall find,

- knock and it shall be opened to you,

for everyone who asks receives,

he who seeks finds,

to him who knocks it shall be opened.

There is no such thing as pursuing God and finding nothing.

Even if you're way off the track, if you have totally wrong ideas about God, if you begin to seek Him you will absolutely find. He will reveal Himself to you, He will speak to your heart, He will touch your mind and

open your eyes.

But there has to be pursuit. We have to do some seeking.

Are you hungry enough for God ---

- to get up early and pray?
- to follow any glimmer of light that comes?
- to seek out anyone who you think might possibly be able to help you?

This goes not only for those outside the Kingdom, but for those within. The pursuit of God never stops.

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek

thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my

flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty

land, where no water is...

Psalm 63

Do you think Paul ever stopped pursuing God? Or Peter?

"When thou saidst, 'Seek ye my face;'

my heart said unto thee, 'Thy face,

Lord, will I seek'."

The more you do this the more you will discover that this is the only pursuit on earth worth the effort.

3. To have faith is to get rid of the distractions.

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the

kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Luke 12:32-34

As we begin to find God we also start to understand what it is that has been keeping us so blind all these years.

- Our treasure has been in the wrong place.
- We've been attached to things in our lives which have become idols.

So we begin to simplify and unclutter our lives. Joyfully we sell all that we have to buy the field. We give alms, providing ourselves with purses that do not grow old - a treasure in the heavens that does not fail.

(No man can tell us what to get rid of next. The Spirit of God shows us - a step at a time.)

This uncluttering of your life is one of the least painful things God will ever call us to do. It won't make you a nervous wreck. Every new distraction you throw overboard will bring new relief, new joy.

". . . then in his joy he went and sold all that he had and bought that field."

4. Having faith is something you have to do for yourself,
no one can do it for you.

But at midnight there was a cry, "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him."

Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the wise replied, "Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather, to the dealers and buy for yourselves." And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:6-10

Don't depend on some preacher or evangelist to pump you full of faith every two weeks. Don't wait around for your husband or wife or child to get in the mood to seek God too. The call of God is on your life now!

The door of the Kingdom is open to you now! You have seen the treasure hidden in the field. Now is your chance to sell all you have and buy it.

The issue is:

"Will you let go of your old life,

your mediocre life,

your self-centered,

vain,

empty life,

and take hold of HIS life? Will you keep doing this?"

Never mind what anybody else on earth is doing,

- what about you?

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the

kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses

that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no

thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will

your heart be also."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-e-bieber/faith-the-reality/>

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