

Have Faith in God

By Pastor Lee Roberson, D.D.

"And Jesus answering saith unto them-Have faith in God." –Mark 11:22

This statement of the Lord Jesus needs to be written upon all our hearts.

As we rise to face each new day, we should "have faith in God." As the day comes to a close and we review what we have tried to do, again there should be that sense of committing everything to God. Whether in sunshine or rain, it will help us to have these inspired words before us: HAVE FAITH IN GOD.

Notice that Jesus did not say, "Have faith." All about us there are would-be advisors who tell troubled people to have faith. The statement is incomplete unless it reads, "Have faith IN GOD."

I trust that in this simple message I can help you to lift up your eyes unto the Lord from whence cometh our help.

Illustration:

A traveler in southeastern France was told if he would climb a certain hill, he could see the Alps several miles away. He did, but could see nothing but the mists rising from the plains below. Then someone said, "Look higher." He did so, and towering within his delighted vision were the snow-white peaks.

Let us, too, heed such a command and look higher unto the hills and beyond for our help.

Faith is made up of belief and trust. Many people believe God, but they do not trust themselves into His keeping and care; consequently, they are filled with worry and fear.

Worry is nothing but practical infidelity. The person who worries reveals his lack of trust in God and that he is trusting too much in self.

Let us learn today that in all true faith there is complete committal to God.

Illustration:

A party of visitors going through the national mint was told by a workman in the smelting works that if the hand were dipped in water, the ladle would pour its contents over the palm without burning it. "Perhaps you would like to try it," said the workman to a man standing nearby.

The gentleman said, shrinking back, "No, thank you. I prefer to take your word for it."

Then turning to the man's wife, he said, "Perhaps, madam, you would like to make the experiment."

"Certainly," she replied. And suiting the action to the word, she bared her arm, thrust her hand into a bucket of water, and calmly held it out while the metal was poured over it.

Turning to the man, the workman quietly said, "You, sir, believed, but your wife trusted."

Now, let us consider this text in the light of God's past performances and His promises for today and the future.

I. HE DID NOT FAIL MEN IN OLDEN DAYS

Sacred history points out to us that no man who had faith in God was ever disappointed.

Turn to Hebrews 11—the great faith chapter. That word "faith" occurs some twenty-five times in this chapter alone. Some seventeen people are mentioned as examples of what faith in God accomplished. I wish that we had time to consider every one of these names in God's 'Hall of Fame.**

In Abel, we have the worship of faith.

In Enoch, the walk of faith.

In Noah, the witness of faith.

In Abraham, the wandering of faith.

In Sarah, the waiting of faith.

In Moses, the work of faith.

In verse 32, we have the success of faith as exemplified in Gideon's life. The song of faith given us by Barak, the supplications of faith by David, the sweet singer of Israel, and the singleness of faith as made known in Samuel.

Through flood and fire, stones and swords, destitution and death, affliction and torment, God delivered His people.

I like to read about **Elijah** and his faith. First, God answered his prayer and brought fire from Heaven, consuming an altar of wood, stone, sacrifice and water, then answered his faith by sending a downpour of rain upon a parched and destitute country.

What a joy to read about **Daniel**, a young man whose faith towered above all others, just as Mt. Everest towers above all other mountains in the world. Nothing was able to daunt the faith of Daniel. The threatening of an enemy could not shake him; the prospect of the lion*s den did not move him from his course. Daniel had faith in God. Sacred history records that God did not fail him.

Nothing but encouragement can come to us as we dwell upon the faithful dealing of our Heavenly Father in centuries gone by. **Faith in God has not saved people from hardships and trials, but it has enabled them to bear tribulations courageously and to emerge victoriously.**

Foxe's Book of Martyrs tell us that men and women with faith in God faced every conceivable torment and death without faltering. In the early centuries when persecution was meted out without mercy, men were known to sing and smile as the fires consumed their bodies.

Doesn't your very heart burn to have such faith in God as the spiritual giants of the olden days had?

II. HE IS ABLE TO WORK MIRACLES TODAY

Let us read the verses which follow our text:

"Have faith in God,

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. "— Mark 11:22-24.

These words are shocking to our modern, materialistic minds; but Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said. Nowhere in this Bible do we find a statement canceling this prayer promise. On the other hand, the Bible is full of promises supporting this statement by Jesus.

Note:

When George Mueller began his mighty work of prayer, he based his faith upon this promise. At first he prayed, then waited for God's answer, then gave thanks. But as he read and re-read these words, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them," **he began thanking God for His answer even at the time the request was made.** If we pray in faith believing, this is as it should be.

It gives me unusual joy to shout out these words, "God answers prayer!"

This is a faithless old world. Men and women are hardheaded, pleasure-mad, money crazy. They write up their successes and say, "The power and might of my hand have done these things." God has been ruled out; consequently, the thrill and romance of true living are gone for most people.

If you are a child of God, know that every promise in the Bible is yours. The Bible is a gold mine, waiting for someone to take out its riches.

Most of us are too much like the woman who received a letter, but in her distress, went to a friend to try to secure some money before opening it. The friend said, "Why, I sent you money yesterday!" "Dear, dear," replied the poor soul, "that must be the letter I put behind the looking glass."

There are people putting God's letter to mankind in some hiding place and failing to make use of the promises meant for them.

What is your need? Take it to the Lord in prayer.

III. HE WILL TAKE CARE OF THE FUTURE

A Salvation Army girl said, "I don't know what's in the future, but I know the Lord is, and I know I am in Him."

It is true that most of our worries are about things that never happen. We anticipate trouble. We cross bridges before we get to them. We spend sleepless nights thinking about things which will likely never come to pass. People become chronic worriers. Even Christians worry until it becomes a habit.

Someone said, "Worry is the interest we pay on trouble before it is due.

Are you worried about **the future**? Then listen to these Scriptures.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."—Ps. 37:5.

Are you a Christian, yet worry about **provisions for the future**? Then hear these words of the psalmist:

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."—Ps. 37:25.

Jesus said,

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"—Matt. 6:25,26.

Paul says to us,

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. . . . But my

God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:6,7,19.

Another kind of faith that I want to tell you about today is saving faith. Without this saving faith, man looks into the future and cries, "Where will I spend eternity?" Without saving faith, all that I have said this evening avails nothing.

What is this faith that is the foundation of time and eternity? It is faith in Christ, God's Son. Phillips Brooks* definition of faith has been helpful to many people: F-A-I-T-H means Forsaking All, I Take Him.

Yes, to be saved there must be an acceptance of Jesus and a committing of oneself to Him. This done, salvation is sure and eternity is settled. We can then say with the Apostle Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The blessed thing about this salvation is that we can have it at the very moment we receive the Lord Jesus. After possessing it, fear of a dark future is taken away and peace comes in.

Illustration:

When Cannon Wilberforce was in this country, he told how a miner, having heard the Gospel, determined that if it promised his immediate salvation, he would not leave the presence of the preacher until he was in possession of that salvation.

After the meeting was over, he addressed the minister in his rude speech, "Didn't ye say I could have the blessing now?"

"Yes, my friend," answered the preacher.

"Then pray with me now, for I'm not going away without it."

And they did pray, both the minister and the man. Waiting before God until the miner heard silent words from the still small voice of the Spirit and knew that he was saved. Then he started up, saying, "I have got it now!" His face was all aglow as he repeated, "I have got it now!"

The next day a terrible accident occurred in the mines. When the preacher reached the scene, the dead and dying were on every side. Searching among them, he came upon this big, brawny fellow whom he had seen the night before. He was dying, also. But when he recognized the minister, his eyes flashed with their new light as he said, "Oh, I don't mind to die, for I have got it! I have got it! It is mine!"

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