



FAITH ENRICHMENT SEMINAR

AN IN-DEPTH BIBLE STUDY

by

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Faith Enrichment Seminar

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My fellow traveler,

As we continue our journey together, may we hear what the Holy Spirit said through Habakkuk in 2:4 ...*the righteous will live by his faith*. The faith of God is a force of power, it is a focus unto God.

Faith is fundamental to the spiritual realm. It connects time to eternity in unique but necessary ways. There are some things in this world for which there are no substitutes. Faith is one of those.

The most important thing about a person is not how he looks, where he lives, the color of his skin, or his race, but what he believes. This presupposes the capacity for faith. The greatest tragedy of our world is that most of humanity does not have faith in God.

We are primarily what we are taught to be. Examples:

- One and one half billion people live on the subcontinent of Asia. In India, most are Hindu. That has been their religion passed down through hundreds of generations.
- Northward and slightly east to China, there are one and one half billion primarily Buddhist—communism of the 20th Century as syncretistic Buddhism.
- Move over to Japan, Buddhism and Shinto's emperor worship or warlords of the past account for their bases of faith.
- N.E. Africa, Egypt and the Arab world are not Hindu, Buddhist or Shinto, but Moslem. The Islamic faith is theirs because that is what they have been taught to be.
- Russia in the last 75+ years has been an atheistic country. That is changing today.
- Spain, Europe, North and South America have been largely Roman Catholic because that is what they have been taught to believe.

These realities stir deeply. What do you believe? What you were modeled and taught no doubt. A better question would be, "In whom do you really believe?" Mark 11:22; *Have faith in God*, have the faith of God or have a God-kind of faith. I believe faith in God is the "bottom line" of all that matters.

Before God created Adam, the greatest prayer/faith dialogue ever in the universe was revealed in Psalm 2:7-8 NIV. He said to the *Logos*, *You are my Son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.* God the Father, whose *agape* love flowed forth, made that prophetic statement before the six-day creation. All history is present tense with God and as such *Jesus was slain from the foundation of the world*, Revelation 13:8 NIV. The basis came from the Father's conversation with the Son regarding the existence of man and the need for an act of atonement. This is the world's most magnificent manifesto.

In classical literature of the arts one may find an interesting principle whether it be opera or concerto. One will sense what is called "exposition". This is the statement or explanatory treatise. It may be the first section of a play or certain musical form, which introduces the main theme(s). Then there is "recapitulation", to repeat, to re-state briefly, to summarize principle points or facts in a preceding discourse.

This has been the direction taken in the following work. There will be repetition, only to emphasize or give further information regarding a specific item or issue. One often finds this in Scripture.

Decades of prayer and research have gone into this book. I sincerely present this work to the glory of God and am thankful that he allowed me to walk the halls of faith now and later in the celestial realms of the New Heaven and New Earth.

Unto His Glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Lemmons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some overlapping letters.

Albert Lemmons

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 1 - Faith and Conscience

INTRODUCTION

1. Mark 11:20-24 - *In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!' 'Have faith in God,' Jesus answered. I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.*
2. I Thessalonians 5:8-11 - *But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

DISCUSSION

- I. Knowledge and Understanding Confront the Truth Seeker.
 - A. The quest for knowledge requires hours upon hours of study. Many are at home in the world of the Bible.
 - B. Understanding on the other hand, pursues the reality of the Spirit, based on knowledge, including the quest for the "Holy Dimension" of "being" or existence. It does not come only at book level, but the cumulative effect of life lived. Everything hints at something transcendent and that is the presence of God. It is a daily experience and the sanctification of life a daily task.
 - C. Prayer for the modern man and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit fly in the face of western culture.
 1. It has left us with an incorrect idea that man is able by his own boot straps to fill all his needs.
 2. Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.*
 3. Jeremiah 10:23 *I know, O LORD, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.*

4. True holiness must include intellectual honesty. The law said ...*do not deceive your fellow man*, Leviticus 25:17, but Christ would say, “neither is one to deceive oneself”.

II. Dogma or Ritual?

- A. True relationship with God is not found only in either dogma or ritual.
 1. Each has its place and is necessary for a complete understanding of our purpose of existence.
 2. Modern man, by and large, has lost contact with the dimension of reality that gives rise to religion.
- B. Where is God?
 1. Is God dead, as Nietzsche said?
 2. Is God hiding his face?
 3. Has God been expelled from his world?
 4. The fact remains that we no longer live in a world where the true principles of Jesus are priority.
- C. Religion claims to be a response to a reality beyond our minds. It exists to enable a man to surpass or go beyond himself and thereby enter into a relationship with a God who transcends this world.

III. Important Aspects of the Natural World.

- A. Power – we may exploit it.
- B. Beauty – we may enjoy it.
- C. Grandeur – we may accept it in awe.
 1. Grandeur is a corridor that offers:
 - a. sublime and wonder
 - b. mystery and awe
 - c. glory and faith
 2. The first word of each is an objective aspect of reality.
 3. The second word is man’s way of responding.

IV. Facts and Truths.

- A. Mankind in general has two different attitudes toward facts: acceptance and/or wonder.
 1. Acceptance stops with whatever is perceived and there is no reason to go beyond it. The mind is made up of facts.
 2. Wonder, on the other hand, is an attitude. Far from being set at ease by a fact, one must take it as a starting point beyond the fact.

3. This may be the starting point of science and/or may be called curiosity.
4. Another starting point may be called religion which allows for radical amazement. In this we respond to the mystery of reality with awe.
 - a. Awe is not unintelligent fear.
 - b. Life is the meeting point of mind and mystery of reason and transcendence.
 - c. To surrender to mystery is fatal.
 - d. To withdraw into reason is to come to an end in self.
5. Facts change, truths are eternal.

CONCLUSION

High over the gates of this world are the words, "Enter With Caution." The result of our fallen world has placed more of the mark of Cain on every man's forehead than the image of God. There has never been so much guilt, distress, agony and terror. At no time has the earth's soil been more soaked with the blood of man. Fellow man rises up to kill his fellow man. Ashamed and dismayed, we ask, "Who is responsible?"

History is a pyramid of efforts and errors. At times it is the Holy Mountain from which God extends his grace and holds judgments over nations. Few are privileged to discern God's judgment in history. When one realizes his own sin, may he know that it was shown to him in order to repent and know what is within him. We have trifled with the name of God. We have taken many of his ideals in vain. We have called out for the Lord. He came and was ignored. Many have preached but eluded him. We have praised but defied him. Now our culture is reaping the fruits of our failure. Through centuries his voice cried out, yet how skillfully it was trapped in temples and church buildings. Often his voice was drowned out or distorted. Now we watch as his voice slowly withdraws, abandoning one people group after another, departing from their souls/spirits. The real taste for good has all but gone from the earth. Men heap spite upon cruelty, malice upon atrocity.

We have profaned the Word of God. We have given the wealth of our land, the ingenuity of our minds and the lives of our youth to tragedy and perdition. There has never been more reason for man to be ashamed than now.

The day of the Lord is a day without the Lord. Where is God? Like Moses, we hide our faces for we too are afraid to look upon *Elohim*, his power and judgment. We have failed to fight for right, for justice and for goodness. As a result we must fight against wrong, against injustice, against evil. This did not happen yesterday. This descent began generations ago. Right and wrong were once as clear as day and night, but now is a blurred mist.

There is a divine dream that prophets, pastors and preachers have had in their day to redeem their time. Now is our day to *redeem the time because the days are evil*, Ephesians 5:16. Our prayers must permeate acts of true humility and piety. It is the dream of a world rid of evil by the grace of God as well as by the efforts of Christians. Our privilege is the task of establishing his kingdom in this world. It is a process. God is waiting for us to be his light in redeeming the world.

We must not be side tracked by trivial practices or preferences when God is waiting for our effort and devotion. God has not created us to satisfy our self-centeredness, envy and ambition wasting our years on lesser vanities. The martyrdom of millions of Christians demands that we consecrate God's dreams of fulfillment and salvation. *This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith*, I John 5:4b.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 1 – Faith and Conscience
Option 1 – The Anatomy of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. Genesis 1:1-2 NIV *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*
2. God created all things good.
3. Any imbalance or frustration of his causes and purposes came from other sources.
4. Genesis 1:26-27 NIV *Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

DISCUSSION

- I. Ancient Principles Reconsidered.
 - A. God created the human family in a perfect state of health.
 1. No evidence that Adam and Eve were physically, mentally or morally imperfect prior to sin.
 2. Genesis 1:31a NIV *God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.*
 - B Some are led to believe that God wants humans depressed, sick, in pain.
 1. The desire of all normal people is to be well.
 2. Sickness is to be avoided at all costs.
 3. If sickness is good, why spend so much on research and prevention?
 4. All mankind instinctively fights disease and illness.
 5. Genesis 1:29 NIV *Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'*

- C. The first indication of the possibility of sickness and or death is in the single warning in Genesis 2:16-17 NIV, *And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'*
1. God did not say he would kill them, but they will surely die.
 2. Both spiritual and physical death was pronounced in consequence of their choice.
 3. Physical death was not imposed immediately. Adam lived hundreds of years after he sinned, Genesis 5:5.
 4. God made death and decay clear, Genesis 3:19 NIV, *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.* This is the first indication of aging, deterioration, sickness, disease and/or physical death.

II. Inherent Preclusion.

- A. God used trees to test humanity.
1. Genesis 2:17 NIV *But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.*
 2. Jesus solved man's ultimate problem on the tree. I Peter 2:24 NIV *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*
- B. In the interim, God often used trees to symbolize deliverance.
1. The bitter water of Marah, Exodus 15:25 KJV, *the Lord showed him a tree.*
 2. He had Moses use the elements of a tree upon which he fastened the object that gave deliverance to Israel. Numbers 21:9 NIV *So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.*

III. Two Trees.

- A. There were two trees in the Garden of Eden.
1. The tree of life.
 2. The tree of knowledge of good and evil.

- B. The same two trees continue to confront and challenge us today.
1. When we are saved, we will be forced to make the same choices as Adam and Eve.
 2. This represents the battle between God and Satan - the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Satan, faith or unbelief.

C. How?

1. These trees represent two spiritual directions.
2. II Corinthians 11:3 NIV *But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*
3. Satan tempted Eve with the tree of knowledge of good and evil because he knew the source of his power was rooted in that tree.
4. The reason God used prohibition, he knew the capability of the human mind, and just the exercise of encountering good and evil was poison.
5. Genesis 2:16-17 NIV *And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'* God did not say if they ate of the tree he was going to kill them, but when they ate of it they were going to kill themselves.

- D. It was not only man's disobedience that brought death to mankind, it was also the fruit of that tree.

IV. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil Is The Law.

- A. I Corinthians 15:56 *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*

1. This occurs because through the law we derive our knowledge of good and evil.
2. One may ask, "How does the mere knowledge bring death until we see the fruit?"

- B. There are many reasons why the tree of knowledge of good and evil kills us.

1. In using our God-like mental facilities, man is distracted from the only source of life, Jesus, tree of life.

2. The tree of knowledge causes man to turn away from God/trust and depend on, and trust, himself.
 3. All appreciate the form but are frightened by its content.
- C. Sin empowered by the law:
1. For the evil it reveals.
 2. For the good it reveals.
 3. Defines our immoral ways else we become self-righteous. Both ignore God and lead to death. This is why legalism is so dangerously sinister.
- D. This is pivotal and is core doctrine as it relates to the entire human family.
1. The tree was in the center of the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:3 NIV but God did say, *You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.*
 2. Selfishness or self-centeredness (unbelief) becomes our worst enemy.
 3. When Adam and Eve experienced the result of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the first thing they looked at was themselves. Humanity has essentially done that ever since. Only Jesus turned this upside-down world back in its proper position.
 4. Prior to sin, Adam and Eve were focused on Jehovah.
 5. After eating the fruit of good and evil they, and we, are forced to face reality because of our ability to do so.
 6. Satan knows that the surest way to keep us from eternal life (the ultimate escape from death) is to keep us in the physical realm, focusing on our pain, prosperity, etc. more than on our pardon.
- E. This is what the law accomplished. II Corinthians 3:8-9 Paul called it *the ministry of death* and the *ministry of condemnation*. The whole issue is one of faith.
- V. What Law?
- A. Not only the Law of Moses.
 1. Not Old Testament law/New Testament grace.
 2. Not Old Testament letter/New Testament spirit.
 - B. Reading the New Testament with an Old Testament heart, will just be another legalistic code. (How many adult Bible classes have completely missed the whole lesson regarding law in Romans and Galatians?)

1. Embracing the above, will create a dead man's righteousness that is performance based on compliance with written rules instead of a living relationship with God.
 2. The Lord Jesus promised to be with us always. Mathew 28:20b
 3. The Spirit and the Word of God indwell by faith.
 4. "The Bible is a means not an end. Knowing the book of the Lord is not our goal; our goal is to know the Lord of the book." Rick Joyner, pg. 8, Let There Be Light.
- C. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ.
1. This is our quest.
 2. This is the principle thesis of Colossians and Galatians.
 3. What Adam and Eve opened up a long time ago was the opportunity for man to measure himself in a physical realm by a physical code. Ever since we have been trying to measure our spirituality by how well we keep the letter/rule.
 4. Spirituality is only enjoyed when Christ is formed in our hearts by faith.
 5. Paul said in II Corinthians 3:6 NIV *...for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*
- D. The spirit of wholeness.
1. Jesus revolutionized the concept of guilt. We know he did not come to abolish the laws of the Old Testament, but he did teach and demonstrate a life governed by a power much greater than the law.
 2. In the Old Testament we see a strong emphasis on ritual and the written law. Jesus taught a greater moral law, obedience not only to the letter of the law, but the spirit of it. He commanded his followers to obey the moral precepts of God.
 3. Not murdering was not the total command. Hatred that would drive someone to murder was also condemned. Suddenly those who had prided themselves on following the law stood guilty.
 4. Jesus changed the emphasis from religion to relationship. Ones who truly surrendered to a personal relationship with Christ opened themselves to the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. More than the rightness of their actions was the surrender of their hearts.

5. Do not be guilty of obeying the law with a sinful heart. Allow God to cleanse you from the inside out. In your relationship with him, find complete freedom.

CONCLUSION

1. The first thing God created was light.
2. He then separated light from darkness.
3. In neither the physical or the spiritual realms do light and darkness cohabit.
4. Nor does it happen in a human heart.
5. When God's work of grace is embraced and salvation is fully realized, be careful that in our zeal we do not overthrow the Holy Spirit's work in our lives as Adam and Eve did.
6. Rather than accept our identity because of who God is, we try to take over his work on a performance basis and frustrate his grace.
7. This is the struggle: God/man; faith/unbelief; law/grace; flesh/Spirit.
8. It is one thing to receive bad and be bad. It is another thing to receive good and be bad. *Thanks be to God for Christ Jesus, that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.* Do not be deceived by thinking that your sin is greater than God's love to forgive your sin.
9. There were two trees in the garden. The fruit of one is death; the other is life everlasting.
 - Adams's choice brought death.
 - But God, but God, planted in mankind the seed that would restore life--Jesus!
 - No mortal flesh alone could begat him, but all flesh may receive him.

NOTES
Module 1 – Faith and Conscience

Faith Enrichment Seminar

Module 2 - Historic/Intellectual Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. *For the director of music. A psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,* Psalm 19:1-4.
2. *Of David. A psalm. The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it,* Psalm 24:1.
3. *Have faith in God,* Mark 11:22a.
4. Faith is the key doctrine (foundation) in our relationship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
5. Ignorance in any sphere of life is calamitous. In religion it is fatal.
6. There should be no conflict between growth in knowledge and faith.

DISCUSSION

- I. Classical Arguments of St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) by which the existence of God can be demonstrated philosophically:
 - A. The “unmoved mover” argument. We know that there is motion in the world; whatever is in motion is moved by another thing; this other thing also must be moved by something; to avoid an infinite regression, we must posit a “first mover” which is God.
 - B. The “nothing is caused by itself” argument. Example, a table becomes a reality by a carpenter, who is brought into existence by his parents. Again, we cannot go on to infinity, so there must be a first cause, which is God.
 - C. The cosmological argument. All physical things, even mountains, boulders and rivers, come into being and go out of existence, no matter how long they last. Therefore, since time is infinite, there must be some existence at which none of these things were. But if there were nothing at that time, how could there be anything now, since nothing can not cause something? Thus, there must always have been at least one necessary thing that is eternal, and that is God.

- D. The Ontological argument, first conceived by Augustine, then further developed by Anselm of Canterbury and Thomas Aquinas.
 - 1. “The science of ontology comprehends investigations of every real existence, either beyond the sphere of the present world or in any other way incapable of being the direct object of consciousness, which can be deduced immediately from the possession of certain feelings or principles and faculties of the human soul.” Arch Butler.
 - 2. This may be studied along with the moral argument as people have different degrees of qualities such as goodness. The idea or reality of goodness makes sense only by comparison with what is maximum goodness. That is God.
- E. The teleological argument (argument from design). Things in the world move toward goals, just as the arrow does not move toward its goal except by the archer’s directing it. Thus, there must be an intelligent designer who directs all things to their goals. That is God.

II. *Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent, John 17:3.*

- A. Is God knowable?
 - 1. Is it possible to know God apart from intellectual arguments?
 - a. Yes! By experiencing him in a personal relationship.
 - b. The relationship moves from casual (mind) to personal or spiritual (heart).
 - 2. The Scriptures speak of many people who, in their religious experience came to know God **directly**.
- B. *I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him, Psalm 34:4-8.*
 - 1. Do not allow arguments of God’s existence to become a threat as the proofs may actually distract one’s attention from God himself.
 - 2. God will make his existence known to you.

3. *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you*, James 4:8.
 4. Do not concentrate on the externals to the degree that we fail to hear the inner voice of God.
 5. For those who seek God, He becomes a reality.
- C. Can God be trusted?
1. There are two choices:
 - a. Avoid the risk, never allowing another person to have power over your life.
 - b. Accept the risk and become vulnerable to sorrow when the trust is broken.
 2. What has been often overlooked is that the first sin was the fruit of the first lie. Satan did not begin by inviting Eve to sin. He began by questioning her and in turn for her to question God, Genesis 3:1.
- D. What difference does God make?
1. God has made himself known uniquely through Jesus Christ, John 1:1-18.
 2. Jesus, agent in all creation.
 3. Source of light to dispel darkness.
 4. This Almighty Creator became a creature.
 5. This is not a contradiction.
 - a. A contradiction occurs when something is both x and non-x at the same time.
 - b. Not so with God. He is both three and one at the same time, but not in the same sense.
 - c. One essence, three persons.
 - d. Jesus two essences, one person.
 - e. "It would be a contradiction to say God has three natures in one nature or three persons in one person", Geisler, Who Made God?, pg. 29.
 6. *God is love*, I John 4:16.
 - a. For love to exist there must be a lover (Father), a loved one (Son) and a spirit to love (Holy Spirit). This is a tri-unity.
 - b. The Trinity is a mystery. "It goes beyond reason, without going against reason. We can apprehend it, but not completely comprehend it." op. cit. Geisler, pg. 30.

CONCLUSION

1. The ultimate failure is when we trust men rather than God.
 - Romanism trembled when Martin Luther saw God.
 - The Great Awakening sprang into being when Jonathan Edwards saw God.
 - Scotland fell prostrate when John Knox saw God.
 - The world became one man's parish when John Wesley saw God.
 - Multitudes were saved when Whitefield saw God.
 - Thousands of orphans were fed because George Muller believed Elijah's God answers prayers still. *God is the same yesterday, today and forever.*
2. Is it now time that we embrace a new vision from God, of God in all his glory. Who can say what will happen when the church sees God. Do not wait for others. Lord, may each of us, one by one, with a pure heart, receive the vision of the glory of the Lord. *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God, Matthew 5:8.* (Conclusion from *Herald of His Coming*).

NOTES

Module 2 – Historic/Intellectual Faith

Faith Enrichment Seminar

Module 3 – The Faith of God

INTRODUCTION

1. “After much prayerful study and research, I am convinced that we human beings are justified through the faith of Jesus Christ and not through our faith in Jesus Christ.” The Faith of Christ, Oliver E. Rogers, Tate Publishing, Mustang, Oklahoma, 2008, pg. 17.
2. *Jesus replied, What is impossible with men is possible with God,* Luke 18:27.
3. Prayerless hearts tie divine hands. It is easier to pray than to believe.
4. Faith is unbreakable confidence in the person of God and is the chief element in prayer, which assures an answer. There are no limits to the power of prayer, except the limits of faith.
5. There is nothing impossible with God. All the impossibility is with man when he tries to measure God by the limitations of unbelief. Nothing ideally is impossible. Human power is limited by human thought. Faith is another word for the power and might of God in the human soul.
6. “Faith is the capacity of the human heart which, when activated by the Word of God, enables a human being who has not seen God to know that God is real.” AGL

DISCUSSION

- I. The Intuitive Heart of God.
 - A. His creation, knowledge and control of the universe reveals a spirit type or kind of intelligence superior to mortal man.
 1. *I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago, Psalm 77:11, 14. You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples, Psalm 77:14.*
 2. Waters, clouds, thunder, whirlwind and lightening and the earth trembled and quaked, Job 38-41.
 - B. Agape love, God’s greatest gift. *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us, I John 4:16.*

- C. Wisdom of God. *Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute,'* Luke 11:49.
- D. Faith – inherent in the nature of God.
 - 1. Deity is possessed of faith.
 - a. *Have faith in God, Jesus answered,* Mark 11:22.
Or, have the faith of God, marginal reading (this is in the genitive/possessive case in the Greek language).
 - b. There is immense diversity in the usage of this case in the original text, but the idea of the faith of God is often used in the same framework as the love of God.
 - 2. The question - Is the Greek text subjective or objective?
 - 3. *the faith of Christ,* Galatians 2:16, 20.
 - 4. *but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God based on faith,* Philippians 3:9b.
 - 5. *Even the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all that believe,* Romans 3:22a.

II. Biblical Declarations.

- A. *Have God's faith* (the faith of God), Mark 11:22.
- B. *...dwell in God's love* (the love of God), I John 4:16.
- C. *God's wisdom said* (the wisdom of God), Luke 11:49a.
- D. *Justified by Christ's faith* (the faith of Christ), Galatians 2:16b.

III. Why Some Reject "Faith of Christ" Translation.

"The translation "faith of Christ" from (πίστεως Χριστοῦ) generally has been rejected because it appears in close proximity with the statement that Christians have believed in Christ. Examples are found in Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16, 3:22 and Philippians 3:9. To make the point clear, note again Romans 3:22: *Even the righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ* (πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) *for all those who believe*. The proponents of "faith in Jesus Christ" translation maintain that it is linked together with the expression "for all those who believe"; consequently (πίστεως Χριστοῦ) should

be translated “faith in Christ” referring to the believer’s faith. Indeed, this interpretation is strange logic! If (πίστεως Χριστοῦ) is translated “faith in Christ” and becomes the believer’s response to God’s action, then repeating the phrase “for all those who believe” is redundant and unnecessary. If the repetition occurred only once, then it might be passed off as a case of emphasis by the apostle. It just happens that the believer’s faith” appears in almost every passage where the expression, (πίστεως Χριστοῦ) “faith of Christ” addresses justification. The logical conclusion is that Paul intended to distinguish clearly between the “faith of Christ: and the “believer’s faith.” The grammar, coupled with Paul’s theology, supports this view. “Even the righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ (πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) *for all those who believe*.

“Of much greater concern should be that translating the thought as “faith in Christ” diminishes the efforts of Christ in the act of justifying mankind. To accept this translation is to shift the burden of responsibility for our justification entirely to human effort that creates an impossible task. Only Jesus Christ is worthy to atone for our sins.” op. cit., Rogers, pgs.169-170.

- IV. Deity Utilized The Principal Of Faith In Creating The Celestial and The Terrestrial Realms.
- A. The Father (God) possessed the thought, or idea of creation.
 - B. The Son (Logos) spoke creation into existence.
 - C. The Spirit (Ruah) brooded, or gave life to creation.
 - D. God created the universe with words. Words filled with faith are the most powerful entity in the universe.
 1. The same principle by which God created (animate) life, is the same principle by which man creates inanimate objects.
 2. The difference in quality of the created has to do with the faith dimension of the creator.
 3. “*The Confraternity Bible* rendered the expression *pistis Cristou* as “faith of Christ” in Galatians 2:16. The highly respected Presbyterian scholar, James McKnight translated the Epistles in the eighteenth century and

rendered both the Roman and Galatians passages as “through faith of Jesus Christ.” James McKnight, A New Literal Translation From the Original Greek of all the Apostolic Epistles With A Commentary and Notes, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949, p. 71. Quotation from Oliver Rogers’ Study Guide, pp. 31, 35.

CONCLUSION

1. The greatest spiritual principle is *faith that works* (operates) *through love*, Galatians 5:6.
2. The reason it is so difficult to address the issue of this lesson is that “sense knowledge” has gained ascendancy and supremacy over man’s spiritual capabilities.
3. We have been so overwhelmed with our physical senses that spiritual truths are hard to embrace/understand.
4. The antagonism of the scholastic world to scriptural truths rests in the fact that authentic faith moves one beyond what our rational, logical minds can comprehend.
5. Jesus said to Thomas, *Blessed are those who have not seen, yet believe*, John 20:29b. Our beloved Master touched the heart of things with that statement.
6. Because of Jesus you and I are linked together with God!

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 3 – The Faith of God
Option 1 - Mustard Seed Faith I
Luke 17:5-6

INTRODUCTION

1. There is a visible world.
2. There is an invisible world.
3. What begins as a small (mustard) seed grows into a giant tree.

DISCUSSION

- I. The Visible Universe Created of Invisible Realities.
 - A. God began in unseen realm.
 - B. God emerged to visible realm.

- II. Faith Perceives as Real Matters Not Discerned by Natural Senses.
 - A. Discuss five senses.
 - B. Faith, “the 6th sense,” touches the unseen.

- III. Faith and The Voice of God, Romans 10:17.
 - A. By his stripes we are healed.
 - B. By his stripes we are saved.

CONCLUSION

1. The invisible is *I am the God who always is*, Exodus 3:14.
2. Motivated by faith, he (Moses) *saw him who is invisible*, Hebrews 11:27.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 3 – The Faith of God
Option 2- Mustard Seed Faith II

INTRODUCTION

1. Matthew 19:26 NIV *...with God all things are possible.*
2. Mark 9:23 NIV *Everything is possible for him who believes.*
3. The first part applies to God. The second part applies to man.
4. This means that through faith the promises of God are made possible *...for him who believes.*
5. Faith (*pistis*) in all forms is used 600 times in the New Testament, faith/unfaith (*apistos*).

DISCUSSION

- I. Definition of faith, “The capacity of the human heart, which when activated by the word of God, enables us to live here but belong to the unseen world.” AGL.
 - A. Hebrews 11:1 KJV *Now faith is the substance . . .*
 1. Faith is so real it is called substance (*hupostasis*). – The literal meaning, “that which stands under or provides the basis for something else.”
 2. Hebrews 1:3 uses the same word, Jesus (*Logos*) *the exact representation of the Father* and upholds all things by the *Rhema*, the voice of his power.
 3. God the Father is the eternal, invisible, and underlying reality of whom Jesus Christ, the Son, is the visible expression.
 4. Faith is real; faith is substance.
 - B. Faith is the conviction of that not seen.
 1. Faith deals with things we cannot see.
 2. Faith relates to the invisible, Hebrews 11:7.
 3. Hebrews 11:3 NIV *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*
 4. Our senses relate to what is seen, the visible world.
 5. Faith takes us behind the visible to the invisible, to the underlying reality by which the whole universe was formed, that is the word of God.

6. Faith relates to two eternal realities.
 - a. God Himself
 - b. His Holy Word

II. Contrast Between Seen/Unseen, Visible/Invisible.

- A. "All the reality of Christianity rests upon the reality of the existence of Jehovah God." Dr. Francis Schaeffer. "God is an infinite circle whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." Anon.
- B. According to scripture, there are two parts to reality.
 1. The natural world we see.
 2. The supernatural world we do not see.
 3. The supernatural is no more unusual in the universe from the biblical standpoint than what we normally call the natural.
 4. The supernatural was first and will continue when the natural/physical is no more. In reality, the supernatural, celestial or spirit world is more natural than this physical world.
 5. When Satan is factored into our world, he is determined to deceive man.
 6. Satan wants you to ask "Is This All There Is?", Nancy Sinatra's sad song from a few years ago. This is why we say that faith is the bottom line because faith is Satan's greatest enemy.
- C. From the biblical Judaeo-Christian view, reality has two halves. It is not one entity.
 1. Like an apple sliced down the middle, you no longer have a whole apple, but two halves. You do not have a whole apple until you have both parts. In the spiritual realm, one part is seen and one part is unseen.
 2. Satan has been quite successful in shutting out the supernatural in the last half century. Not only in the Restoration Movement, but in affluent society in general.
- D. The Christian life includes living in both halves of reality, the supernatural and natural.
 1. The supernatural does not become a reality only at the new birth (salvation) and then at death or at the second coming of Christ leaving man hanging out there as it were in some Deistic world with all the interim problems and troubles in between.

2. Being a Christian means power from the supernatural world in your life today - not in theory, but in practice. That connection is through the power force of faith.
3. Unfaith is the Christian not living in the light of resurrection power now.

E. Results:

1. Christianity is a good moral life.
2. Equipped to deal with spiritual warfare.
3. The Lord will not honor our weapons because they are man's battle and not his, therefore when kept in the natural realm, the gravest sin is that we steal honor and glory from our God.
4. The Lord's work done only in human energy is not the Lord's work. It is good, but it is not the Lord's work, Matthew 21:21; Mark 1:20; Luke 6:10; John 14:12-14, 15:6, 16-17.
5. When a moral being acts on his own will to do any good thing never done before, in order to bring the thought into reality, that process, that energy is faith.
6. Faith becomes the germ. What follows is the result of the faith-seed converting the idea into reality.

III. Faith As A Sixth Sense.

- A. Faith is a condition of the heart. *With the heart man believes*, Romans 10:10. This involves the spirit man who dwells in a physical body.
 1. Faith is a spirit force, a power force. The inner-man is able to feed upon the things of God, who Himself is a spirit.
 2. This becomes potentially, heart to heart, spirit to spirit, or faith to faith communication.
 3. There is a sixth sense – Faith, Spiritual man.
 4. There are five senses of the physical man. This enables him to contact and function in the natural world.
- B. Spirit man is made alive with the life from God (eternal life), resurrection power and the sixth sense, faith which enables him to function in the spiritual realm.
 1. Repeat, total reality in this universe consists of two worlds – seen and unseen, visible and invisible, material and spiritual, Hebrews 11:3.

2. What one sees in this physical, material world was not made of things you can see, but made of the invisible. The Creator of this universe started in the unseen, spiritual dimension. The first creation building blocks of God are not in this material dimension.
- C. Here is an illustration about the five senses. It involves my story when I met my wife. I was a boy off the farm and went to Freed-Hardeman College. There I met a popular young petite blonde girl. She wore a perfume the likes of which I had never encountered. It got my attention. My nose responded remarkably to her fragrance. In the natural realm, my other four senses did not have any proof at all that the perfume was real. "I can't see it," said my eyes. My ears could have said, "I don't hear perfume. You will never convince me that anything is real that I can't hear." My hands could have said, "I don't feel any perfume. You will never convince me anything is real that I can't feel". My tongue could have said, "I don't taste any perfume. There is none there." I could begin to think there is no perfume there. I can't see it. I can't hear it, I can't touch it, I can't taste it. My nose would say, "You other four senses be quiet. As the nose, I have already experienced the perfume with my sense of smell so I confirm its reality. It matters not that you don't see it, hear it, touch or taste it, my ability to smell says it is real!"
- D. In the same way I go into the word of God with my sixth sense, faith. The Holy Spirit confirms to me what God says and because of who he is, I receive from that invisible realm what belongs to me because I am a son of God, a child of the King.
1. As a conscious being of this terrestrial realm, I believe:
 - a. Salvation is mine, Romans 6:23.
 - b. Healing is mine. He took our infirmity, Isaiah 53:4; Matthew 8:17.
 - c. Blessings of both worlds are mine, Ephesians 1:3.
 - d. God's protection is mine. *Never will I leave you,* Hebrews 13:5.
 - e. The privilege of prayer is mine, Jeremiah 33:3.
 2. Once this happens, one or more of our natural inclinations will try to contradict what God, who cannot lie, has assured. There is a spiritual principle at work. Faith must take over like the nose in our illustration. Question! Why should we allow our five natural senses to have more integrity than

Almighty God? Walk in God's promises, be warmed in the sunlight of his love wrapped around you. Never be afraid to trust your unknown future to your known Holy God.

3. Faith causes the inspired word to become an audible voice of God to your soul. Hebrews 11:1-2 tells us that God created this material world out of things you cannot see. Many of God's richest blessings come from the invisible: Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Paul. Little or no true exercise of faith will rob your soul.
 - a. Redemption is spiritual.
 - b. Forgiveness is invisible.
 - c. Healing is intangible.
 - d. Blessings are beyond comprehension.
 - e. How do we know?
 - God said it.
 - Faith brings it into our every day life in this visible world.
 - E. This is the battleground. Remember, the battle against Satan is only won when you are *lead by the Spirit of God*, Romans 8:14, and your inner man is renewed. The inner man rejoices over what he knows to be true through knowledge gained from the word of God by the sixth sense, faith.
 1. Faith reaches out into the invisible realm. It creates the physical sojourn of the Christian out of invisible truths. Now faith is the assurance, the confirmation, the warranty deed of things we hope for, being the proof of what we do not see.
 2. Faith perceives as real what is not revealed to the five senses.
 3. Faith does not make the unreal real, but the unseen real.
 4. Motivated by faith, Moses gazed on Him who is invisible, Hebrews 11:18.
- IV. Faith Or Sight? II Corinthians 5:7.
- A. If one walks by faith, he does not need sight.
 - B. If one walks by sight, he does not have the unseen dimension of faith.
 - C. The world says seeing is believing.
(Illustration of Thomas in John 20)

- D. The Bible reverses the order, believe then see. In Psalm 27:13 David said he would have despaired unless he had believed that he would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Notice which came first!
- E. I Peter 1:8 *Though you have not seen him, you believe in him.*
- F. Hebrews 11:27 *By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.*
- G. Abraham, Genesis 18:1, 10; Romans 4:17b.
- H. John 11:1-40 *Remove the stone.*
1. What Jesus asks of Martha, he asks of all who desire to see the glory of God. We must believe first, the result of belief will bear fruit. We will see the glory of God!
 2. Faith comes before sight or there is no spiritual blessing. The purpose of this is to show the basic conflict between the old nature, which lives by the five senses: see, hear, touch, feel and smell. The new creation, II Corinthians 5:17, is the new nature, new man, new way of life.
- I. II Corinthians 5:7 *We live by faith...*
- J. II Corinthians 4:17-18 NIV *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For that which is seen is temporary, but that which is unseen is eternal.* Paul shows us the results of the transition between the visible and the invisible.
- K. How does faith regard the unseen realm? An example of Moses. While affliction in the providence of God serves a useful purpose to believers, it strengthens and prepares us for eternal glory.
- L. Affliction serves us only while we keep our eyes on the invisible realm.
- M. Mankind is caught up in two worlds. The temporal world, we contact with our physical senses. The eternal world, God assures us, is to live by faith here. Faith is the only way of relating to that unseen realm.

CONCLUSION

1. Faith lifts us above the realm of our own ability and makes God's possessions available to us.
2. Faith relates us to two unseen realities:
 - God.
 - His Holy Word.
3. Ongoing struggle between faith and sight:
 - Old nature - comfortable with senses.
 - New nature - able to trust God.
4. Closely related: faith (present) x hope (future) - difference in intellectual and existing reality - faith in the heart - hope in the mind.
5. Many are disappointed in prayer requests they do not receive. Oftentimes it is because they are praying in hope not in faith. Results: promise of God to faith and not God's promise to hope.
6. Romans 10:10 NIV *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.* Reason: faith (heart), hope (mind/intellect). Mental assent alone is not faith. Faith must penetrate beyond the mind into the inner (center) source of life, called the heart. *With the heart man believes.*

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 3 – The Faith of God
Option 3 – The Blessing of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. *To those who believe in His name he gave the right to become children of God*, John 1:12b.
2. *This is his command to believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another*, I John 3:23.
3. Believe-verb; believer-noun, Webster, p. 169.
4. Faith (noun), trust, to confide in, credibility. op. cit., pg. 658.

DISCUSSION

- I. What Is Faith? Hebrews 11:1.
 - A. Faith is giving substance (foundation) to that which is not seen.
 1. ...*calls that which is not as though it were...*, Romans 4:17b.
 2. For one to act when he has evidence is not great faith.
No faith, little faith, great faith.
 - B. Faith is not a feeling or “feeling sure”.
 1. As one matures in his “faith-walk”, feelings will match or come along side of faith.
 2. Faith is a way of life. *We walk by faith and not by sight*, II Corinthians 5:7.
 3. *The measure of faith God has given you...*, Romans 12:3b, is born in your spirit in the new birth, John 3:3-5.
 4. Faith becomes the spiritual organ that enables you to function in the spiritual realm and live out spiritual reality.
 5. This is the means by which the Holy Spirit presents both gifts and fruit.
 - C. “A spiritual kingdom lies all about us, embracing us, altogether within reach of our inner selves, waiting for us to recognize it. God is awaiting our response to his presence. The eternal world will come alive to us the moment we reckon upon its reality.”
A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God; Live a Praying Life, Jennifer Kennedy Dean, p. 153.

II. The Importance of Faith.

A. To honor God.

1. Fellowship with the Father, Romans 8:31-32.
2. Our sufficiency is from God, II Corinthians 3:4-6.
3. We are united with God.

B. To please God.

1. *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him*, Hebrews 11: 6.
2. *Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor*, Luke 12:32-33a.

C. To serve God.

1. One is in the company of a *cloud of witnesses*, Hebrews 12:1a.
2. Those lives are examples of faith in action.
3. Throw aside every weight, sin and hindrance.

D. To live in his eternal presence.

1. *Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life*, Revelation 2:10.
2. *Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life*, Jude 21.
3. *For you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls*, I Peter 1:9.

III. A Thomas Kind of Faith.

A. Sense/human knowledge.

1. It is not complimentary to be called "Doubting Thomas" That may align one with the man who possibly hurt Jesus from a spiritual stand point more than any other apostle, including Peter and Judas.
2. We have Scripture that tells us Jesus told the twelve apostles thirty times that he would die, be buried and rise from the dead in three days.

3. Thomas' faith was based on "sense" knowledge. He saw a dead body placed in a tomb.
 4. Thomas was hindered by a misplaced focus.
- B. Nothing is as malicious as unbelief.
1. There has never been armor for the heart that could shield it from the spear of unbelief.
 2. The sword of the Roman soldier no more assuredly penetrated the heart of Jesus than did the unbelief of Thomas whom Jesus loved.
- C. Sense/human knowledge faith is one of the most dangerous enemies and one of the most deep-rooted wrongs of western civilization.
1. That one knows very little about the depth of New Testament teaching.
 2. Often the person who is led by and walks in the Holy Spirit is held in suspect.
 3. May pray and wish to have faith, but human knowledge cannot be that source of revelation faith.
 4. One lives in the spiritual fog of frustration.
- D. The Solution?
1. *Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted, Isaiah 53:4.*
 2. *Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well, James 5:14-15a.*
 - a. Faith is not in the elders or the oil. That would be sense/human knowledge.
 - b. It is only when the Word of God is believed for what it says that the blessing is brought forth.
 - c. The elders, oil and prayer are the channel in God's hands to bring it to pass.
 3. Matthew 8:5-13. The Centurion was humble. He asked Jesus to "just say the word", vs. 8b. Jesus complimented his faith, vs.13b, and said *Go! It will be done just as you believed it would. And his servant was healed at that very hour.*

- E. Faith grows as a result of responding to spiritual senses.
1. Not what eyes see or ears hear.
 2. Only through the “Word of Christ”, Romans 10:17.
 3. The word used here is *rhema*, the voicing of a word, the spoken word.
 4. The living voice awakens the faith potential and gives it life.

CONCLUSION

1. Logic cannot give to life what faith can produce.
2. One of three foundation pillars of Christ’s coming to earth was to bring the qualities of God into man’s heart. Those qualities were greatly diminished by Adam’s sin.
3. Faith in God is man’s unique ability to “take hold” or “partake of the divine nature”, II Peter 1:4 KJV.
4. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith*, Romans 1:17 KJV.
5. “Faith unto Faith”? “It is not clear in what exact sense this is to be understood.” Pulpit Commentary, Volume 18, p. 9.
6. Is it possible that this could mean from the faith of man to the faith of God?

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 3 - The Faith of God
Option 4 – The Triumph of Faith - Lecture

In this session, I want to discuss the mustard seed kind of faith Jesus talked about when he said in Luke 17:6 NIV . . . *If you have faith as small as a mustard seed...* He was making the point that something can emanate, can come from such a small beginning when God is in it, to abound and increase and to be such a blessing to many.

Recalling Mark 11, a section of Scripture with which we are familiar, Jesus said, *Have faith in God or have the faith of God.* From these verses, there are two things that I will conclude. One is that there are no limits to the power of prayer except the limits of your faith. Two is that faith is the chief element in prayer that assures an answer from God. That is not to say this is all that is important. But I am saying that the Bible teaches faith is the chief element of prayer that will assure an answer.

Open your Bible to Matthew 19:26 NIV. In this verse Jesus said *...with God all things are possible.* File that in your mind. With God all things are possible! Turn to Mark 9:23 NIV and make a note of it. Jesus said *... everything is possible for him who believes.* A similar account is said in Luke 17, but let us particularly note Luke 18:27 NIV, *Jesus replied, 'What is impossible with men is possible with God.'* What do you think that verse means? Apply it to principles, missions, a challenge that is bigger than a man can accomplish without God.

Another verse, Ephesians 3:20 NIV, will serve as a basis for the next session. Turn there. Some would say, "Well, Paul is talking in apocalyptic language," meaning in sign and in symbol. This is not in the book of Revelation; this happens to be in the book of Ephesians. And that is straight prose just like Corinthians or Galatians. Read it again. *Now to him (God) who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

Suppose you wanted to describe God. This is a unique scripture. There is not another verse in the Bible that I know about just like this one. Grasp it: *Now to him (God) who is able.* Period! That says everything! *...to him (God) who is able to do.* Period! He can do anything he wants to do. *...to him (God) who is able to do immeasurably more.* Period! *...all we ask.* That says everything! *...all that we ask or imagine.* That is even more! *Now to him (God) who is able to do (to perform) immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.* What is that power? It is God's power. Of what does the power of God consist? One of the chief elements is faith--the heart of the Christian practice is faith.

Unfortunately for many of us it has not been that way. We have not understood. Does the Bible say "when Jesus Christ comes back to earth will he find well-organized programs?" No. When he comes back to earth, will he find massive cathedrals? No. It does say, *When the Son of Man comes back to earth, will he find faith in the earth?* Luke 18:8. To the young people, let me speak to your tender hearts--I pray to God who made you that you will be able to take these truths and move much further with them than my generation has done. Please listen as I speak from three-score+ years of living and from a heart of love, this is the bottom line of what ultimately matters. My prayer is that God will give you the strength to move this into another dimension beyond my generation and more to where God would have it be.

Now moving to that power--the power of that mustard seed kind of faith. Open your Bible to Ephesians 2:8 NIV. How many times have we heard it read? Many of you can quote it. Let's read it. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.* What is the gift of God? He said grace. For many years I preached that and was right. However, I did not understand all that was there. And I still don't, but I do understand more than I did. What is "not from yourselves?" Everything in the verse is "not from yourselves"--grace, faith, salvation. From whom? From God! How are we saved? By faith - therefore, being justified by faith, Romans 5:1. The exciting thing about studying the Bible is the way God opens truths, enlightening our hearts and minds.

What is the gift of God? Everything in verse eight is a gift of God. The antecedent of the word “it” is salvation, not grace. Grace is in one gender and salvation is in another. “It” conforms to the gender of the word salvation. The “it” there is not referring to grace, except as it is a part of the overall plan for saving man. We are saved by faith; grace is the means by which it is appropriated . Everything in verse eight is a gift.

Read it again. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves...* Why do you think those last five words are in the verse? They mean something and what is that? I have been able to quote it for years, and did not have a handle on the meaning. It says *and this not from yourselves*. Everything in that verse is a gift of God. What is the gift of God? A God-kind of faith comes from God. It does not come by some experience separate and apart from the word but through the word. A God-kind of faith comes from God to me through his word. That is significant! It is important! The kind of faith that accomplishes more than I can ever do through my own strength and ability. That God-kind of faith comes to me through his word. We proclaim it in kindness and love because that’s what the Holy Spirit said. Involved in this is a divine and wonderful experience. We have already talked about the difference between faith, fact, and feeling. The Bible does not say that we walk by feeling; it says we walk by faith and there is a difference. When they align with one another, the result is significant. But when there is discrepancy, we must go by what God says and not by feelings.

Your part in being saved is insignificant. God’s part in salvation is 100%. Man’s cooperation with God is the catalyst that allows the work of God to be accomplished. And what we do does not earn one ounce of heaven. We allow God’s way of saving us by faith to do just that. Faith that saves comes from God through his word (both *Logos* and *Rhema*). More detail on this will follow in other lessons. Like the word prayer, we will find it opens doors to rooms that we have not often visited.

One part of faith is intellectual understanding and one part of faith is intellectual belief. Logic and reason are a part of faith, but not the sum of faith. A third element of faith involves expectation. If I expect to fail, this indicates that I trust myself more than I trust

God. God allows Satan to win a few battles, but God is going to win the war. I am absolutely positive when I tell you that the last page of the Bible says we win! *This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith,* I John 5:4 NIV. It comes back to faith which is indispensable. There are other good things that go hand in hand with faith, but this is something without which we cannot please God. Faith is more than some of us have understood it to be in terms of the fruit of our lives. I judge the motive of no man or the heart of any.

A fourth element of faith involves trust or reliance. That is more than it may seem to be! Faith is a response to the nature of God, a moral response. Some of the greatest evidence to me that there is a God is not the order of the desmids nor the diatoms nor in the microscopic world nor in the beautiful formation of heaven that we behold looking at a distance nor in the loveliness of a stream that trips its way down a mountainside, all of which are breathtaking and show evidence of a designer. To me the greatest evidence that there is a God is the human conscience. That is the nearest thing to the reality of the living God. Just as the wing of a bird implies air upon which that little body may be borne to preserve, protect, and perpetuate its kind, the very nature and structure of a bird's wing implies air by which it may fly. The structure of a human eye implies light that one may see. The makeup of the ear implies sound that one may hear. The existence of a human conscience is one of the great evidences that there is a God in heaven. This involves the psychology of man and the nature of faith.

God could never allow a human being to see a visible, physical form of deity in the person of Yahweh or Jehovah. According to Deuteronomy 4 Moses said, *You know when I was in the mountain, you saw no similitude (likeness) of any male or female or anything that creeps on the earth or any winged thing that flies in the air or anything that's beneath the waters of the sea, neither sun nor moon nor stars, that you should corrupt yourself.* Moses is saying that God could never be seen in any visible form because had that happened, they would have carved an idol like what they had seen. And when they sensed their need for God, they would have laid hands on that idol and said, "See here, I have God!" And what a fool Satan would have made of them!

For that reason God could never allow a face-to-face encounter. Theophany is an encounter that man has with God; however, there is no visibility in terms of some corporeal form or materiality. That gets involved in the nature of God, the theology of God. Anthropomorphism means attributing to deity human traits or characteristics and thus speaks of the hand and eye of God. But so far as any materiality is concerned, *spirits do not have flesh and bones, as you see I have*, Luke 24:39 NIV. *God is spirit*, John 4:24 NIV. Therefore God is not corporeal, not limited by time and space, and is not made up of flesh and bone structure as we are.

God knew that he could never allow man to look at him face to face while man was in the flesh. Faith is the substitute for the person of God until we come to be with him. On that occasion it will take on another dimension. The role of faith is in reality a substitute. Faith actually makes the unseen real. Faith has that ability. That should allow us to know there is no way to make it without faith. Faith is more than a mental acquiesce that there is a God in heaven. It involves the intellectual, the logical, and reasoning part of man. But there is more to it than that. So faith is the substitute for the person of deity while man walks in this flesh. That is a significant idea in terms of leading our minds to develop an idea of what faith is or more importantly, how significant it is. Of all things in the universe, God chose that entity, and faith is a power force. It is his substitution for his own person until we come to be with him. Then faith continues in another way. A number of things will change at that juncture. This is one reason Satan fears and hates faith with such tenacity. He knows this brings mortals into a relationship with God in a way that threatens his very existence.

Open to Hebrews 11, verse 7. This is the faith chapter. *By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, moved with fear, built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.* This verse begins and ends with “by faith.” When social groups gathered in those days, I am sure the topic of conversation was that “thing” under construction! “Folks, there is the strangest thing going on out there in the valley. Have you seen it lately? You know, I stopped and talked to that old man and asked him, ‘Noah, what are you going to do with it? We’ve never seen

anything like that around here. Nobody has ever done it this way before; we haven't done it that way in the past. Noah, what are you doing?" He did not see or understand, but he had God's word. Must we see the end of a matter before beginning? There is no faith. Arks are not built by people who need to see the end before they begin! That is an elementary condition of faith. It really approaches what I call "Christian atheism." A claim to walk by faith when in reality it is doing what makes sense to us and not what God would have us do. *By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going,* Hebrews 11:8 NIV. Abraham, not knowing and Noah, not seeing, obeyed. The world would say, "Hold it! That makes no sense."

Another story we should add here, imagine a Jewish uncle walking up to a young man named Moses and saying, "Moses, you've been reared in Pharaoh's house, and you've had an education that no other young Jewish man has ever had. Son, I want you to think about something. You would give a lot of us very much security if you would go ahead and accept that throne. After all, you could really do much to help us. Those old row-houses, those slave quarters we live in, son, you could do something about that. Use your head, boy. We'd still know who you are. You could sit on that earthly throne, and you'd have your name carved in some stone pyramid in the Valley of the Kings." Do you suppose a Jewish uncle might have said something similar to a young Moses? The bird in the hand concept, something seen and something felt, power I can know. But by faith, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. It does not make good sense for a young man to turn down an opportunity like that.

It is beyond reason for a man to build an ark like Noah did. It does not make sense for a man to leave his business connections in Ur of the Chaldees, his roots, like Abraham did. We're all interested in roots. Here's a man whose roots were torn up and out. I don't want to go too far with this, but I want to make a point. I can just imagine Abraham saying, "Lord, I can do you good right here. This is my home; my business connections are here." If there were such a thing as a bank back then, he probably was the chairman of the board at the bank in Ur of the Chaldees. "Lord,

my business connections are here.” You get the point? He did not reason that way. God said, “Up and out,” and he went out not knowing!

We say we walk by faith. I am posing a situation. A young man and his family come through town. He is well trained. He has a burning in his heart to go to one of the continents of the earth, the dark continent of Africa, etc. He has a family whose heart is willing to give up relatives, holidays, and the conveniences of America and go to the bush country where his wife will have to wash and do things like your grandmother did fifty years ago. He is willing to do it. He is willing to go there for six or ten years or even be buried there. This family comes to your church and presents their plan. You look at it and know it is a good plan, no question about it. He is well trained, a man of God, a man of commitment and can do far more than any of us are able to do or willing to do. But you do not have his program in the budget. What will be your final answer to him? Are you going to believe this man’s coming was just random or that God sent him to allow your church to get involved with the work he wants done?

We say we walk by faith and not by sight. Is that what you do? Have you been in a situation when you had to make that choice? At our house some things have come to us that gave reason to make that choice. Is seeing believing for you are can you trust God to see you through? Do you go by what you can see or by your faith in God? You ask, “How far are you to take that?” We will be studying this in another session. We are talking about the difference between men of faith and men of sight. The Bible says we walk by faith, and I ask the question, “Do we really?”

One of the problems of middle age is that folks quit dreaming. I want to assure you that faith is not a dream. There is a way one moves forward with God to make what is unseen real. That does not happen by accident. The faith process is involved in your own destiny, your own eternity. It doesn’t matter if you are seventy-five or fifteen. It involves each one of us. He did not say that only the young ones walk by sight and the rest of us by faith. We all walk by faith. And I ask, “Do we really?” Faith makes it possible, not easy.

Let us look at this further. Open your Bibles to Matthew 16. I know there is something in this chapter that applies to folks today. This is the chapter that tells us *Upon this rock I will build my church*. I am going to read some verses in this chapter that I struggle with. *When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread*, Matthew 16:5 NIV. Forgetting something is not an unusual thing for a person to do. No doubt I have forgotten something today that I needed to do. And his disciples forgot to take bread. *'Be careful,' Jesus said to them, 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees*, Matthew 16:6 NIV. Those Sadducees--we think we don't have much in common with those characters, but I say they are really our counterparts from 2000 years ago. They were the best folks in town. If it were their tradition to go to church three times a week, they would have been there Wednesday nights! They were strong believers in family, the dignity of man, the resurrection of the dead, formal worship, in monotheism. They gave alms and they practiced the orders of Judaism in matters of the law. But there was something about these fellows that Jesus is warning his disciples about. "Now, Lord, I know there are some things about those Sadducees you need to caution your disciples about, but the Pharisees? What is it? Is it just those hypocrites, that they made pretenses?" "Lord, were they drunkards?" "Were they immoral?" "Were they dishonest?" Not so far as the Bible says, but there was a problem. It was a problem that involved faith. Look at it.

They (the disciples of Jesus Christ) discussed this among themselves and said, 'It is because we didn't bring any bread,' Matthew 16:7-8. When Jesus perceived, (he could read their minds!) he said to them, *You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread?* Faith is what we are talking about. We are getting this straight from the word. Look at it again. Jesus said, *Disciples of mine, I want to warn you about those Pharisees.* "Lord, who are those Pharisees?" They had been in a covenant relationship with Jehovah for 1500 years. They had the Ten Commandments, but I want to tell you something. They had built so many fences around the law that they had shut out God and acted like he did not exist. They just went to synagogue and temple and went through performances because that was their custom, and there was little heart in it. Do you get the picture? Look at it. And the disciples reasoned

among themselves saying, "It is because we didn't bring any bread." Because Jesus could read their minds, he said to them, '*You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread?*' Who was in their midst? Jesus Christ!

Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? Matthew 16:9-10 NIV. And now you are upset because you did not bring the lunch even though I am here. You are ignoring me. In other words, if you did not do it yourself, it is not going to be done." Did you get that message, brother? Does it hit hard? That is a very difficult story to grasp. Who was in their midst? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who made everything and performed so many other miracles. And those fellows who had been with him all that time had seen the miracles he performed, and were upset because they had forgotten the bread. They were thinking they would have to do without lunch. Jesus response, "You know what fellows, you act like I am not even around. You have absolutely shut me out of your thinking. O yes, you think about me in terms of heaven, but you do not think about me in terms of your bread." I am not interpreting I am just reading it to you. He goes on to say, '*Don't you remember what happened with a little boy's lunch? We fed five thousand and with seven loaves, we fed four thousand.*'

How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, Matthew 16:11-12 NIV. What is that doctrine? I believe it is unbelief. It involves other matters, but I am telling you it is basic unbelief. They went to church every time the doors were open, but they had shut out God. They had absolutely built fences and walls around the Law of Moses and seemingly shut out God. And Jesus said, "You disciples have done it to me. I am in your very midst. You saw me do all these things, and I am telling you don't you dare do me like the Pharisees have done Jehovah God." They would fight the heathen in defense of God, the name of God. They would fight the heathen on behalf of the righteousness of God, but allowing

him to be personally involved in their life was different. He said, "You have done the same thing here today because you forgot to bring the lunch. You think you're going to have to do without it. You think you are going to go hungry. Have you forgotten about me? Don't you know I'm right here?"

This should be a concern for each of us in the twenty-first century. Have we who go to church three times a week shut out Jesus? Do we really walk by faith? Do we do what we're doing "for appearance", habit, tradition? A question, do you not believe he can get the job done? Do you not think he is stronger, wiser and smarter than you are? Do you now see the reason to trust him more than you trust yourself? He says he can work through you if you will allow him to do so.

God will not force a man to do anything. Independence is involved in the psychology of man. Many regret that they chose unwisely. But God is not going to interfere with your right to do what you want to do. You have the privilege of choosing right or wrong. It is not right to do wrong, but we have that right in the sense of the privilege. We can make the decision to do wrong. For one man to do right because he wants to, brings more glory to God than if every man did right because he had to. And that is all involved in the background of the nature of man, in the nature of sin. *...to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*" What is that power? Will just any power do? No! No! It involves the power of faith. The power of God embraces the role of faith. It is easier to pray than to believe.

My question, as we close this session, do you truly believe God? One reason we need to trust God more than any man is because at man's best he reasons on the basis of fear because we are not omniscient. I can know truth that tells me that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for me and the appropriations of Calvary by my faith response to God, cooperate with God and I am saved. If God wanted me to be baptized every day, I would do it the first thing every morning. Question "have we shut out God?"

“Have we shut out Jesus?” We can go to church and do many other things that are good, but have we shut out Jesus when it comes to allowing God’s will in our lives as a faithful tool? Walking by faith is not the same as walking by sight.

We are beginning to establish the structure of faith. I want you to see what it is. In our final moments, let me tell you that faith is not the product of mind alone but of heart. It is not logic and reason alone. Faith in its mature stage involves a reborn human spirit that will *trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight*, Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV. Faith is not the product of mind alone but of the heart. Faith is a power force. It is tangible; it is conductive. It will move people; it will change people. It will change the mind. Sin changed Adam’s faith to fear, and he said, “I was afraid.” It was about to change Peter’s faith to fear, and he prayed one of the shortest prayers in the Bible, “Lord, save me.” Jesus did not condemn Peter for doing an unusual thing. Even in the days of miracles, folks did not just go around walking on the surface of the Sea of Galilee. But he did condemn Peter for losing the faith by which he could finish what he had started. It took more than was in just a man to finish it. That is what Jesus condemned.

By virtue of its nature, faith excludes uncertainty and doubt; *I know whom I have believed*. Of all the options of the human mind, faith is noble. As surely as there is such a thing as the conscience of a man or woman, there is the valid existence of deity. And so in principle faith involves confidence, conviction, firmness, assurance and determines a man’s condition and destiny. It looks to the purposes of God regarding the children of men and God’s way, the means by which God will work in our lives. Faith is the nobility of the inner life. I say this in final word. God may have a life of faith for you that will be illogical to people who live around you. Neither did contemporaries understand Noah’s ark, or Moses not becoming Pharaoh, or Daniel’s lions’ den or the fiery furnace in their day. If you choose to live by faith, you are going to be different.

NOTES
Module 3 – The Faith of God

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 4 – The Source of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile, Romans 1:16.*
2. The new birth, John 3:5-7.
3. Obedience is the result of grateful hearts who have received the gift of salvation, James 2:14.
4. Salvation of humanity is the infusion of divine strength. Our knowledge that God is willing to give and man's willingness to receive his blessing of salvation.
5. Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

DISCUSSION

- I. Biblical Salvation.
 - A. *And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved, Joel 2:32. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, Romans 10:13.*
 - B. Word of God, James 1:21 KJV.
 - C. *They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved, II Thessalonians 2:10.*
 - D. *Grace. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, Titus 2:11.*
 - E. Repentance. *So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life, Acts 11:18b.*
 - F. Confession. *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, Romans 10:9 KJV.*
 - G. Baptism. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer (**eperotayma-to request, pledge or ask**) of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I Peter 3:21 KJV.*

II. Case Study.

- A. Consider Abraham: *He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: All nations will be blessed through you. So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith, Galatians 3:6-9.*
 - 1. Many focus on what they had to do instead of Christ.
 - 2. Abraham's faith preceded his obedience.
- B. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, Ephesians 2:8.*
 - 1. (*Charis*) grace – feminine gender.
 - 2. (*Pisteuos*) faith – feminine gender.
 - 3. (*Sesomenoi*) saved – masculine gender.
 - 4. (*Doron*) gift – neuter gender.
 - 5. (*Touto*) this – neuter gender
- C. Romans 3:27-31.
- D. Romans 4:1-13.
- E. *As it is written 'I have made you a father of many nations'. He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were, Romans 4:17*
- F. *In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead, Colossians 2:11f.*

III. Results of Salvation.

- A. Forgiven and delivered from sin.
- B. Justified. *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5:1.*
- C. Sanctified. *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God, I Corinthians 6:11.*
- D. Name written in the Book of Life, Revelation 20:12-13.
- E. *Seated with Him in heavenly places, Ephesians 2:6.*
- F. Enjoy eternal life now, John 10:28; I John 5:13.

CONCLUSION

1. Time cannot remove sin, only reveals it.
2. One touch of the divine hand can change defeat into victory.
 - Flesh yields to spirit
 - Time yields to eternity
 - Mortality becomes immortality
3. We have heard the joyful sound, Jesus saves, Jesus saves!
4. Who was it that saved our guilty souls when we knelt at the foot of the cross? Who turned our darkness into light? Who stands by our side at this moment, ready and willing to give grace and glory? Who can it be but Jesus?

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 4 – The Source of Faith
Option 1 – The Power of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. Faith defined Hebrews 11:1, 3 *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see... By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*
2. Audacious statements of Jesus Christ regarding faith:
 - a. Matthew 19:26 *With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*
 - b. Mark 9:23 *'If you can believe', said Jesus, 'everything is possible for him who believes.'*
 - c. Luke 17:5-6 *The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' He replied, 'if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey you.'*
 - d. Luke 18:27 *And he said, 'The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.'*
3. Faith is unbreakable confidence in the person of God and is the chief element in prayer which assures an answer. There are no limits to the power of prayer, except the limits of faith.
4. There is nothing impossible with God. All the impossibility is with man when he tries to measure God by the limitations of unbelief. Nothing ideally is impossible. Human power is limited by human thought.
5. "Faith is the capacity of the human heart which, when activated by the Word of God, enables a human being who has not seen God to know that God is real". AGL

DISCUSSION

- I. Faith - Inherent In The Nature Of God Himself.
 - A. Deity is possessed of faith.
 1. Mark 11:22, *'Have faith in God', Jesus answered.* Or have the faith of God, (marginal reading in the genitive/ possessive case in the Greek language). There is immense diversity in the usage of this case in the original text, but the

- idea of the faith of God is often used in the same framework as the love of God.
2. Galatians 2:20 is only one correlation to be examined in reference to the above.
- B. Deity utilized the principal of faith in creating the celestial and the terrestrial realms.
1. The Father (God) possessed the thought or idea of creation.
 2. The Son (*Logos*) spoke creation into existence.
 3. The Spirit (*Ruah*) brooded, gave life to creation.
- C. God created the universe with words. Faith filled words are the most powerful entity in the universe.
1. The same principle by which God created animate life, is the same principle by which man creates inanimate objects. The difference in quality of the created has to do with the faith dimension of the creator.
 2. Unbelief, *apistos*, is the greatest sin. Faith is Satan's greatest enemy. Doubt is a virus to faith affecting spiritual health, as a viral infection affects the state of one's physical health.
- II. A True Relationship With God.
- A. Habakkuk 2:4b ...*the righteous will live by his faith.*
- B. Saved by grace of God. Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.*
- C. **Identity** versus **performance**, a grave religious struggle.
1. Identity - who you are.
 2. Performance - what you do.
 3. Shame - who you are.
 4. Guilt - what you do.
- D. When one is saved by the grace of God, that gives status/sonship. The believer obeys, loves, serves, and worships God because he is saved. The gratitude, mercy and forgiveness he extends to others are only possible because of what Jesus did for him at Calvary. Psalm 116:1 *I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy.*
- E. When one is saved by performance, he/she can never do enough or be good enough, which results in anger, an unforgiving, judgmental attitude, and insecurity.

- F. The privilege of prayer is the birthright of the meekest child of God-- one who has experienced the sacred privilege of the believers' baptism. Peter tells us in Acts 2:38 *Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*
- G. Build your self-worth on the forgiveness and unconditional love of Jesus Christ, never on circumstances of life, good or bad.
- H. Qualifying for right standing before God.
 1. Jews - based on covenant with Abraham.
 2. All - faith.
 3. Many religious people - traditions/rituals.

III. The Prayer Of Faith Glorifies God.

- A. Keep channel/access to God clear of self and sin.
 1. Psalm 66:18 KJV *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me.*
 2. Psalm 24:3-4 *Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that has clean hands, and a pure heart.*
 3. Galatians 5:5 *By faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.*
- B. Prayer and faith allow God to work out His purpose in our lives.

IV. Confidence In The Character Of God.

- A. Believe he will do what he says. He is a covenant-keeping God.
- B. Isaiah 45:11 KJV *...command ye me.*
- C. Faith and Prayer.
 1. Much faith, much prayer.
 2. Little faith, little prayer.
 3. No faith, no prayer.
- D. Faith is a response to the nature of God just as:
 1. The eye implies light to see.
 2. The ear implies sound to hear.
 3. The wing of a bird implies air to fly.
 4. The conscience of a heart implies God.

V. The Prayer Of Faith Believes God **HAS** Answered.

- A. Mark 11:24 KJV *Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you **have** received it, and it will be yours.*

- B. All true prayer is the expression of a desire for the will of God to be done.
- C. God's will **IS** done.
- D. In patience wait on God, then faith will demonstrate God's answer that before was not visible.
- E. The object of all true faith is our Holy God.

CONCLUSION

1. The fires of many altars have gone out because the prayers of faith have ceased.
2. The prayer of faith is a means by which God chooses to intervene in history.
3. Luke 7:50 *Your faith has saved you, go in peace.*
 - **Say** it in faith
 - **Do** it in faith.
 - **Receive** it in faith.
4. Luke 18:8b *When the Son of Man comes, will he find **faith** on the earth?*

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 4 – The Source of Faith
Option 2– Faith and Patience

- I. Faith That Survives The Test.
 - A. Faith is more than reasoned trust.
 - 1. The Christian heart is vulnerable when he/she has *prayed in faith, therefore believing he has received*, Mark 11:24, but before the answer has been given. That test is real.
 - 2. It is important to have faith in God because of who He is.
 - B. God allows time to do two things in such a circumstance:
 - 1. Days come and go, circumstances add up to question the faithfulness of God. Example of Abraham and Sarah, Genesis 12:3, 15:2,18, 16:1, 17:3,19, 8:10, 21:1-2.
 - 2. God in his providence (eternity over time) may bring to pass events that will only produce gestation with the passing of time. Example of Joseph.
 - C. We may cry, “but God, nothing is happening. I prayed. I believed. I have not received!”
 - 1. My admonition is to utilize the “measure of faith”, Romans 12:3, which God faithfully apportioned to you. The faith he gives you and me in any circumstance is adequate to meet the enemy, I Corinthians 10:13.
 - 2. Do not allow any apparent contradictory circumstance to detract you. If you do, you will miss the blessing.
 - a. Abraham believed God, Romans 4:17-24.
 - b. Thomas allowed his understanding of death to outweigh all the promises of Jesus' resurrection, John 20:24-29.
- II. Faith And Patience.
 - A. Hebrews 6:12b ... *imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised*.
 - 1. The importance of patience is regarded as standing for the “time factor” in God’s sovereignty.
 - 2. Patience is God's gift which allows *faith to have her perfect work*, Romans 15:5.
 - B. God’s gift of patience (waiting on Him) is the result of the reborn mind (new creation) that does not allow matters of time to overload or set aside the promises of our eternal God.

1. Patience in faith will allow one to step out into the water, not knowing how deep or whether there is another side. It does not stop believing.
2. Mark 9:23, *'Everything is possible for him who believes', said Jesus.*
3. This continued faith is nurtured by confession. I Timothy 6:12, *Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*
4. It is the opposite of despondency or hopelessness.

III. Faith and Patience Give Birth To Hope.

A. Romans 5:1-5 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*

1. Hope fuels the soul for the journey that has a destination around the throne of God.
2. Hope in Christ is your staff.
3. Resist the devil's deliberate efforts to take away hope.
 - a. Satan accusing you of sin, unworthiness, etc.
 - b. Facing betrayal of a companion or friend.
 - c. Battling cancer or other serious illnesses.
 - d. Reality of economic ruin.

B. Hope under girds faith until the promised answer is received.

CONCLUSION

1. Faith, love, patience and hope are not words of antiquity. They are present life for those who live here but belong somewhere else.
2. There was sin before there was death.
3. The prayer of faith will help us deal with our pain. Pain for mortals, is the privilege of having something worth losing. Jesus died to show the value of one human soul, and that it is worth saving.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 4 – The Source of Faith
Option 3 – Heroes of Faith

I. Heroes Of Faith

- A. **Noah**, Hebrews 11:7 *By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*
- B. **Abraham**, Hebrews 11:8-11 - *By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise.*
- C. **Moses**, Hebrews 11:24-27 - *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; **he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.** Moses was not a victim of the visible.*
- D. Hebrews 11:13-16b *All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. They were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.*
- E. Hebrews 11:38-40 *The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised.*

II. The Power Of Faith.

- A. Isaiah 1:18 *'Come now, let us reason together,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.'*
 - 1. Faith is not the product of human reason alone. *So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God,* Romans 10:17 KJV.
 - 2. Matthew 16:6ff *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees... Why do you reason among yourselves?*
- B. Men say "be logical, be reasonable, seeing is believing."
 - 1. Believers are not led totally by logic or even by what the world says is good sense.
 - 2. If this had been the case, Noah would not have built the ark, nor would Moses have given up the throne of Egypt and the possibility of becoming a Pharaoh.
- C. Faith includes:
 - 1. Intellectual understanding
 - 2. Intellectual belief
 - 3. Expectation
 - 4. Trust and reliance

III. Human Logic.

- A. Product of human reason by awareness that includes hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling and smelling.
- B. When more than human results are required, faith is the only answer.
- C. Men reason on the basis of fear because they are not omniscient. What one does not know, he usually fears and what he fears he seeks to destroy.
- D. Faith in its mature stage is not the product of human reason alone, but of a reborn human spirit, John 3:3-5.
 - 1. Faith is not the product of mind alone but also of the heart.
 - 2. Faith is a power force. Like agape love, it is tangible, conductive, it will move people, it will change people.
 - 3. Sin changed Adam's faith to fear and he said *'I was afraid.'*
 - 4. Doubt changed Peter's faith to fear and he said *'Lord save me.'*

IV. One Is Not Moved As Much By What He Sees Or Feels As By What He Believes.

A. By virtue of its nature, faith excludes uncertainty and doubt.

II Timothy 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for 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.

B. Faith involves confidence of conviction and firmness of assurance.

C. Faith determines a man's condition and destiny.

D. Faith looks to the purposes of God and the means of their accomplishment.

E. God may have a life of faith for you as illogical as for Noah.

F. Faith is nobility of the inner life.

CONCLUSION

1. Who cares if God can do it, but doesn't?

2. The answer is faith.

3. The ark was built by an amateur. The Titanic was built by professionals.

NOTES
Module 4 – The Source of Faith

Faith Enrichment Seminar

Module 5 – The Voice of God

INTRODUCTION

1. *So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God,* Romans 10:17.
2. Words used to describe an experience with God are called theology. When one begins his experience with God that is one thing. When one begins with theology without the experience or relationship, his spiritual life may become cold and divisive.
3. A serious problem arises when we impose an English word on certain Hebrew or Greek words and by such action attempt to tell those ancients what we think they should have said, whether they said it or not. This study deals with one of those problems.

DISCUSSION

I. Etymology Of Relevant Words.

A. Jehovah, as He communicates with man in the Old Testament.

1. The voice of God (קוֹל) *Qol* “sound, voice, of human voice, utterance...”¹
2. “*Qol* primarily signifies a sound produced by the vocal cords (actual or figurative); the sound of God’s voice going on the wind that Adam heard in the Garden of Eden.”²
3. The Word of God (דְבַר) *dabar*, speech, “word, message, discourse, Word of God, as a divine discourse or communication in the form of commandment, prophecy and words of help to his people used 394 times...” then the word of Yahweh came unto.....”³
4. In their writings, pages 839 and 109, Bible Scholars, Bauer, Koehler and Baumgartner, are in agreement with the above interpretation.⁴

B. Jehovah as He communicated with man in the New Testament.

1. ῥῆμα (*Rhema*). That which is said, word, saying, expression, the sound of words, a voice, profuse in speech, talkative, the mighty creative word, pay attention to what I am proclaiming, preaching, objective genitive (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως), Romans 10:8b. The word of God, with subjective genitive, Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 6:5 (θεοῦ ῥῆμα).⁵

2. **ῥῆμα** - That which is spoken, declaration, saying, speech, word...command, mandate, direction, narration.
3. **ῥήτωρ** – “an orator, advocate.
4. **ῥητῶς** – in express words, expressly”⁶
5. “The significance of **ῥῆμα** (as distinct from **λόγος**) is exemplified in the injunction to take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word **ῥῆμα** (voice of God).” In Ephesians 6:17 the reference is not to the entire Bible, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture.”⁷
6. **λόγος** (*Logos*), a word, statement, message of faith, treatise, the Christian message, the gospel, the word of the kingdom.
7. “It is the distinctive teaching of the Fourth Gospel that this Divine Word (**λόγος**) took on human form in the historical person, that is Jesus Christ. There is one God, who has revealed himself through Jesus Christ his Son, who is his Word proceeding from silence.”⁸ “The Word (*Logos*) is Jesus Christ.”⁹

II. The Voice of Jehovah God.

- A. The voice (*Qol*) of God broke the silence of eternity.
 1. **וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים** and God said. In Genesis 1, “God said” appears eight times. Of greatest importance is the who - “God” and the what - “said.” His voice uttered forth. His voice was the first sound in this physical universe and that same voice will be the final sound in the ultimate consummation.
 2. God “said”, “then He saw”, is written three times in Genesis 1. What He saw or witnessed was good, it happened.
 3. The “said” was the cause, the “so” was the effect.
- B. God exercised a Divine dimension, a quality of His very nature, the God-kind of faith.
 1. When a moral being chooses to do something never done before and from a thought, germ or idea, has the energy to bring such into contingent or material existence that is Faith!
 2. Millennia after millennia existed before the voice of God was inscribed as a record in some earth form.

3. An authentic record was revealed by Moses in Deuteronomy 4:13, *He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets.*
 4. More detail is added in Deuteronomy 5:22. *These are the commandments the LORD proclaimed in a **loud voice** to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.*
 5. The saying and the writing were two different things.
- C. The *Logos* is the voice of Yahweh.
1. John 1:1 and 3 affirm that the word (*Logos*) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by and through Him. Both then and now His creative word (*Rhema*) voice upholds or sustains this physical world, Hebrews 11:1-3.
 2. His voice is the glue that holds this world together.
 3. *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him, Colossians 1:16.*
 4. This material world was created with faith filled words. "Let there be...and it was so."
 - a. The Father thought it.
 - b. The *Logos* articulated it.
 - c. The *Ruah* gave it life form, Genesis 1:2b.

III. God's Revelation From the Old Testament.

- A. Articulate non-literary, Deuteronomy 4:1ff.
1. Clearly uttered, spoken, pronounced.
 2. Prophets and teachers preached and proclaimed messages from God.
 3. I Kings 13:1ff is a classic illustration of the man (prophet) from Judah who came to Bethel and *cried out against the altar by the Word of the Lord*. This was a verbal discourse, *which was written later for our learning*, Romans 15:4.
- B. God and the Patriarchs.
1. God spoke to Adam and Eve.
 2. God's covenant with Noah was a verbal agreement, no written documents.

3. *God said to Abram...*, Genesis 12:1ff. In Genesis 15 God and Abram came to a mutual agreement on a very important issue. There was no scribe or written copy to that pact. However, it includes all history from Abram until the end of time.
4. Holy Spirit filled men captured the voice of Jehovah as they wrote on vellum or parchment the words He spoke.
5. *For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*, II Peter 1:21.

IV. Regarding The “Last Days”.

A. The Voice of God.

1. *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe*, Hebrews 1:1-2.
2. The voice of God was heard by John the Baptist and all who were present at the most celebrated baptismal service in all history.
3. *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased’*, Matthew 3:16-17.

B. The parables, conversations and sermons of Jesus were first spoken.

1. The Canon (the body of Scripture) known as the New Testament was “God breathed” *Theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), II Timothy 3:16.
2. The spoken words of Jesus and messages, prayers, exhortations and sermons by holy men of the first century, became the books of the New Testament, John 5:25.

C. *Logos* (λόγος) is the Greek word for New Testament scripture.

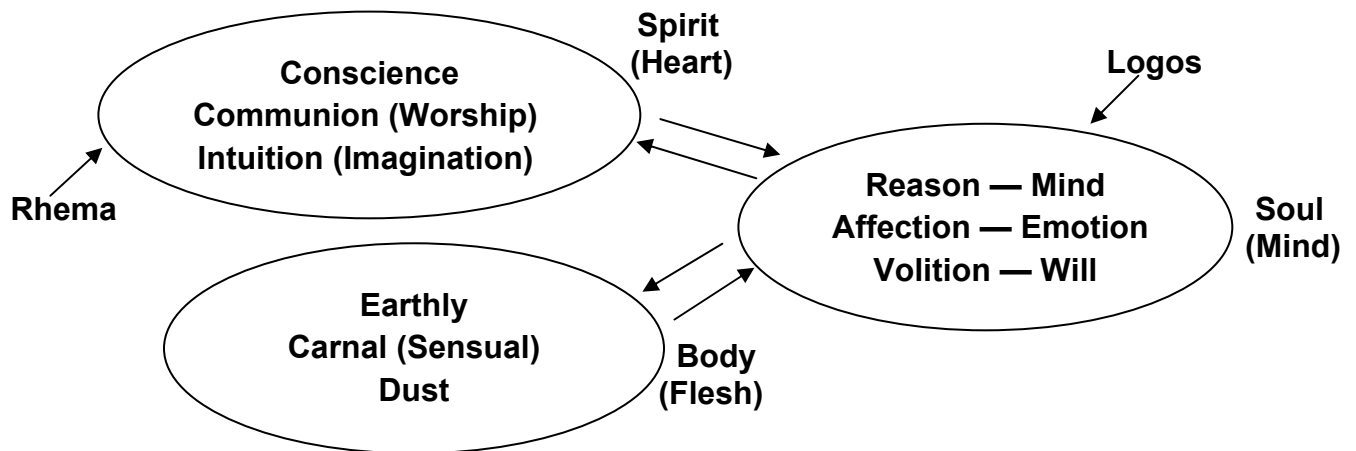
1. *Logos* has a broader use, however, that is the primary meaning.
2. Definition:
 - a. Something of importance expressed in words and usually in written form.
 - b. Denotes expression of thought.

- c. The Bible is called scriptures, I Corinthians 15:1-4.
 - The Bible claims to be the record of Jesus Christ, John 5:39.
 - The Bible claims to be the written word of God, II Peter 1:21.
 - The Bible is inseparably linked with the living word of God, Jesus Christ, Hebrews 4:12, I Peter 1:23.
- 3. “Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God and the Bible is the written word of God. The written word of God testifies to the Living Word even as the Living Word (Christ Himself) testifies to the written word.”¹⁰

V. *Rhema, Logos* and Faith.

A. What is man?

1. Psalm 8:4 *What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?*
2. I Thessalonians 5:23 *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
3. Romans 10:17 Faith comes by hearing the (ῥῆμα, *Rhema*) voice of God from the lips of Christ, the Messiah.
4. Man is a spirit. Man has a soul. Man lives in a body.



5. One hears a saying (Voice) – (*Rhema*) – word of God.
 One reads a writing (Bible) – (*Logos*) – word of God.
 One loves a Savior (Jesus) – (*Logos*) – word of God.

- B. The difference between hearing and seeing.
1. *He replied, The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. This is why I speak to them in parables: Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it, Matthew 13:11-17.*
 2. *...but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure'. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it,' Luke 10:20b-24.*
 3. *For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind, I Corinthians 14:14-15.*
 4. The above scriptures set forth clearly that the human spirit (heart) is one thing and the human mind (soul) is another.
 5. Faith comes by listening to the voice of God.
- C. Practical teachings from Jesus.
1. In the Gospels, Jesus said seven times *having ears to hear and eyes to see*. Jesus also said seven times to as many churches in Western Asia Minor, Revelation 2 and 3, *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says...*
 2. He was not talking about physical ears, everyone has two ears, ears to hear.

3. He is talking about an inner condition of the heart. Hear God with one's spirit or heart.
4. This is different from seeing and knowing information in the mind. This is where very important information is found on the pages of twenty-seven books of the New Testament.
5. The study of the written inspired Word of God allows one to know about God.
6. This is the logical, rational, reason one knows about God. There is no substitute for continuous, respectful study of the written Word of God.
7. Knowledge of the written word forms the foundation or launch pad. If faith uses this as its sole source, the result may be that of a Thomas faith.
8. Thirty or more times Jesus told the twelve apostles he would die, be buried then be raised from the dead. When it happened, Thomas did not believe what Jesus had said even when ten of his fellow apostles confirmed his resurrection, John 20:24-29.
9. Jesus affirmed this when he said *because you have seen me, you have believed, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed, 20:29.*

CONCLUSION

1. When the inner ear hears the voice (*Rhema*) of God, it changes the heart. Authentic faith is the result, Romans 10:17.
2. Information from the written page forms the basis or extent of potential Christian service.
3. The levels of the knowledge of God in the mind constitute the faith potential of the heart.
4. The values of your heart, not mind, will set the ultimate course of your spiritual life.
5. The knowledge of the mind alone will set the course of man's intellectual life. Man has great capabilities. (Tower of Babel, Genesis 11). God came down to see what men were building. This was man's faith in what he could do.
6. The affluence and wealth of the western world is a strong temptation for church leaders to plan and do many great things when they "see it". Often it may be said "Look what God has done." It could be another Tower of Babel.
7. Faith comes from hearing the voice of God.

8. Ephesians 6:17 *Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the (Rhema) voice of God.* This is a key to understanding the necessary role of the indwelling Spirit of God. It often enlightens our insight. I call it our “now” word.

End Notes

1. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Oxford Press, London, 1953, p. 876.
2. Harris, Archer and Waltke, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Moody Press, Chicago, 1980, pgs. 792-793.
3. *op.cit.*, p. 182.
4. Koehler and Baumgartner, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1951, pgs. 839 and 109.
5. Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, University Chicago Press, 1957, pgs. 742-43.
6. Harper, Analytical Greek Lexicon, Samuel Bagster, London, p. 359.
7. The New Strong's Dictionary of Bible Words, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, p. 1354.
8. Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, pgs. 479-480.
9. Practical Word Studies in the New Testament, Leadership Ministries, Chattanooga, TN, 1998, p. 2335.
10. Webster Concise Dictionary, 1993, p. 36.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 5 – The Voice of God
Option 1 - Spiritual Deafness

INTRODUCTION

1. What spoiled the Garden of Eden?
2. Something happened that removed God's voice.
3. The nature of faith is so designed by the Lord to nurture and connect the heart (spirit) of man with God, our conscious connection with eternity.
4. All creation subsists by the **ῥῆμα**ti word of God. His voice is the glue that keeps this universe intact. *The voice of nature, unknown to man, goes out into all the earth, Psalm 19:4.*
5. What happens when God speaks to man, *but man does not perceive it?* Job 33:14b.
6. *Jesus said, This is the reason I speak to them in parables, because having the power to see they do not see, and having the power of hearing they do not hear, nor do they grasp and understand, Matthew 13:13 Amplified Bible.*
7. What conditions exist to prevent one from hearing the voice of God?

DISCUSSION

- I. Satan, the Ultimate Enemy.
 - A. His mission is to distract and distort the voice of God from human ears.
 1. He will tolerate information in the mind.
 2. He will do all in his power to keep that information from transforming the heart of man.
 - B. Satan, the enemy, appeared on the scene.
 1. Adam was commanded to till and keep the Garden, Genesis 2:15.
 - a. Till and keep, plough and guard, work and watch.
 - עֲבַד (avad) till, tend
 - שָׁמַר (shawmar) – watch, guard, protect
 - b. Adam was more concerned with horticulture than protecting or guarding Eve's heart.

- c. Had he been on guard, he had the power and authority to deny Satan's access to his wife. She was deceived, II Corinthians 11:3. He joined her, and lost his immortality. Spiritual death moved into the human spirit.
2. Jesus said, *When any one hears the word of the kingdom and understands it not, then the evil one (Satan) comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart*, Matthew 13:19.

II. Fear (הַיִּרָאָה) *yirah*; (φοβος) *phobos*.

A. Fearing, reverent, afraid, fearful.

1. The English word has two principal meanings.
 - a. Encounter of evil which leads to fight or flight.
 - b. Awe and/or reverence which one senses in the presence of God and to a lesser degree in the presence of loyalty.
2. "There are fifteen different Hebrew nouns rendered fear in the AV". Zondervan Bible Dictionary, p. 279.
3. The Greek New Testament uses *phobos*, fear, in both references.
 - a. Matthew 14:26 the disciples cried out in fear mistaking Jesus for a ghost.
 - b. Romans 3:18 *there is no fear of God in their eyes*.
4. The use of "reverend" used once in Psalm 111:9 means to be feared and is reserved for Jehovah.
5. Other contrasts:
 - a. Psalm 31:13 *fear was on every side*.
 - b. *Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*.

B. *When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, 'Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die'*, Exodus 20:18-19.

1. Moses said to the people, do not be afraid, Exodus 20:20.
2. The people remained at a distance, vs. 21.
3. The sound effects of Sinai startled Israel. It struck fear and terror of Jehovah's judgment.

C. The fear of intimacy with God.

1. The uniqueness, the weightiness and/or awesomeness can strike horror UNLESS one realizes fear may not be necessary.

2. Not “if” but “when” God became angry, Numbers 14:11-12, 34; Hebrews 3:17. Men had the right to be afraid.
 3. Because of God’s agape nature HE IS LOVE, I John 5:4-8.
- D. The source of fear.
1. *Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’ He answered ‘I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid, Genesis 3:7-10.*
 2. God’s displeasure made known.
 3. Man unfit for beautiful Eden.
 4. Adam’s reluctance to leave. God drove him out.
- E. Certainty/uncertainty regarding spiritual sate.
1. When Adam and Eve lived within the Lord’s instructions all was well.
 2. When they chose to step outside of his will, God withdrew his voice and presence. What a horrifying thought.
 3. God chose Abraham, Genesis 12:1ff.
 - a. Abram chose to respond to God’s call.
 - b. God called Abraham “my friend”, Isaiah 41:8b. *And the scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness and he was called God’s friend’, James 2:23.*
 - c. *Abraham stood before the Lord, Genesis 18:22b.*
The dialogue of intercession between God and Abraham is one of the most endearing illustrations of God talking to a man.
 4. *God said, ‘Give them a king’, I Samuel 8:22.*
 - a. God approved Saul and instructed Samuel to anoint him, Samuel 9:17.
 - b. Saul fell out of favor..., I Samuel 13:13ff.
 - c. The Lord rejected Saul as king, I Samuel 15:26b.
 5. Both Abraham and Saul were chosen by the Lord. They had his approval and blessing. One continued to be faithful. The other ended his own life in fear and disgrace.
 6. *There is no fear in love, I John 4:18f.* Fear is a mask over love.

- a. One of the reasons for emotional fear is a defense created by the ego to conceal love. It usually is a deep sense of loss.
 - b. Fear is a cry for help. It is a recognition of what has been denied.
 - c. Embracing the love of Jesus will eliminate the basic cause of fear. With the help of the Holy Spirit, fear will give way to love and be overcome, thereby overcoming evil with good. The veil drawn across the heart has been removed. Much fear emerges from our memories of people who did not give us what we wanted or needed. They are memories of past hurts. These shadow figures stand between us and a healthy life of faith.
7. *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love,* 1 John 4:18.
8. A horrible consequence is when fear forbids one to enter the holy sanctuary of God's presence and as a result forbids us to hear the voice of God.

III. Calloused Heart, Isaiah 6:10a; Matthew 13:15a.

A. Free to choose.

- 1. Because man is free to choose, does not mean God has left the scene.
- 2. God's authority is not coercion.

B. Calloused.

- 1. "Fat כבד *kaw bade*, be heavy, in a bad sense burdensome, severe, dull." Strong, p. 541.
- 2. Emotionally unresponsive, branded flank of an animal, blocked, interfered, entangled.
- 3. Their heart is as fat as grease, Psalm 119:70a.
"Void of feeling, stupid, filled with sensual pleasure and unconcern about and inattention to eternal things." Bible Cyclopedia, Volume II, pg. 773.

IV. Dull of Hearing, Isaiah 6:10b; Acts 7:51, 28:27.

- A. *You have become dull in your spiritual hearing and sluggish, even slothful, in achieving spiritual insight.* The Amplified Bible, pg. 344.

B. The statement “and are become such”, Hebrews 5:12b, is a solemn warning. “The words seem to intimate that they had once been well instructed and had forgotten that teaching. This accounted for their dullness of hearing. Either they had not continued to hear, or they had heard so carelessly that they were not benefited by what they heard... They omitted preaching the Gospel. This was to reclaim those Hebrew Christians from back sliding and preserve them from total apostasy, that this epistle was written”. Adam Clarke, Volume VI, pgs. 720-721.

C. Additional passages.

1. *Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say*, John 8:43.
2. *No one understands – no one intelligently discerns or comprehends. No one seeks out God*. Amplified Bible, pg. 227.
3. *Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say*, Psalm 82:5.

V. “Stubborn And Stiff-Necked.”

A. *You stubborn and stiff necked people, still heathenish and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are always resisting the Holy Spirit, as your forefathers did, so do you*, Acts 7:51; Amplified Bible, pg. 184.

1. “*Aperitmetos* as an adjective means uncircumcised. In Acts 7:51 it is used metaphorically of ‘heart and ears’. Strong, pg. 972.
2. The third of three reasons for circumcision was a rite of initiation, new membership, status, implying leaving former status.
3. This was a sign of agreement with God.
4. In the New Testament there is a new shift toward a spiritual and inner significance of circumcision, namely that done by the Holy Spirit upon the heart - *circumcision is of the heart*, Romans 2:29. *We of the circumcision worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Jesus Christ*, Philippians 3:3.
5. *In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men, but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.*

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ, Colossians 2:11-13.

B. Hard hearts.

1. God fulfilled his promise to Abraham after four hundred+ years that he would bring back his descendants to the promised land, Genesis 15:12-21; Exodus 12:40-41.
2. At Kadesh Barnea the people heard “the voice of God” telling them to enter the land.
3. They hardened their hearts. All but two adults who left Egypt would never enter the land of rest, Hebrews 3:11-4:2.
4. Our share in Christ will be of no practical value to us if we permit the same attitude to develop in us as was displayed by Israel of old. This attitude, characterized as sinful, disobedient and untrusting, v. 12, can harden us and keep us from responding to the voice of God when He speaks to us. Question: Is my heart open to God? Am I eager to learn and do what He wants me to do?
5. Because of the hardness of their hearts, their disobedience and unbelief, a journey of eleven days took forty years, Deuteronomy 1:1-2; Hebrews 4:11; Numbers 14:11; Jude 5.
6. Pharaoh’s “hard heart”, Exodus 7:3-5, 16:16b, 9:13-16.

VI. Lack of Anointed Leadership Covering.

- A. There is order in a moral universe.
 1. Leaders emerge in all levels of animal life.
 2. Leadership is necessary in civil life.
- B. The basic purpose of leadership is to preserve and protect those led.
 1. This is true among nations.
 2. This is true in the religious world.
- C. God appoints leaders of nations, Daniel 4:35.
 1. Prophets were appointed and anointed at God’s command.
 2. God appointed Christ as head of his Church, Eph. 1:20-23.
 3. Apostles, prophets, elders, deacons and teachers are appointed for a purpose known to our Father.
 4. *Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you, 1 Timothy 4:14.*
- D. Anointed leaders provide a spiritual environment in which one may hear the voice of God.

CONCLUSION

1. The above illustrations assist us as we have been *raised up in Christ* to hear the voice of God.
2. We must be on guard to prevent these same attitudes from developing in our lives.
3. We can be hardened by the same lack of trust and not hear God's voice when He speaks to us.
4. Prophetic words regarding hard, unbelieving hearts are full solemn pathos.
5. The problem does not originate with the preaching of the gospel. Hidden disunity of the heart is brought to light.
6. Hardness of heart is both a natural consequence of contempt of the truth and a Divine judgment upon it.
7. No sin, no ingratitude of man, however, can dim the splendor of the eternal heaven of Grace.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 5 - Voice of God
Option 2 – How to Develop a Sensitive Heart

INTRODUCTION

1. *Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in the full assurance of faith*, Hebrews 10:22a.
2. God spoke to one of my favorite prophets, Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, a high priest in the time of Josiah, King of Judah, saying *obey me, **hear** my voice and I will be your God and you shall be my people*, Jeremiah 7:23-24, *...but they did not listen or incline (bow) their ear.*
3. In order to hear the voice of God, one must develop a sensitive heart which is essential in following Jesus.
4. Jesus said, *My sheep **hear** (akouo) my voice*, John 10:27.

DISCUSSION

- I. Listening to the Voice of God.
 - A. God called Samuel, I Samuel 3:4.
 1. Often the word used here includes a name.
 2. Name implies authority or sovereignty.
 - a. God named light, etc.
 - b. Adam named animals – authority over all.
 - c. Mother names a child – her right to do.
 3. Samuel had a sensitive heart. He ran to Eli, vs. 5, the Lord called again vs. 6. After the third call, Eli perceived the Lord's call to the boy.
 4. The dialogue continued. God's voice, the young prophet's sensitive heart answered, *Speak for your servant is listening*, vs. 10.
 - B. Jehovah called Solomon by name, I Kings 3:1ff.
 1. God spoke to Solomon in a dream, I Kings 3:5b; Job 33:14-15.
 2. God said, *Ask for whatever you want me to give you*, I Kings 3:5b.
 3. Solomon's humility is exemplary in his response, I Kings 3:6-9.

4. “So give your servant a discerning (hearing) heart (שמע) *shama* meaning to hear something with one’s ear, to gain or get knowledge”. Strong, pg. 861.
 5. God was pleased and said, *I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be,* I Kings 3:12.
- C. God gave Solomon a unique gift.
1. God’s voice.
 2. The heart is a safe or a vault where ones most valuable treasures are kept. *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life,* Proverbs 4:23.
 3. The value of a sensitive heart sets one’s course of life.
 4. Open your heart and attach great importance to the voice of God.

II. The Requirements of a Sensitive (Hearing) Heart.

A. Attentive – ready for the voice.

1. *My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words,* Proverbs 4:20.
2. *My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight,* Proverbs 5:1.
3. *Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach,* Proverbs 22:17.
4. Listen carefully (attentively) to the voice of God. Bow down the ear in humble worship.
5. The fear of silence. Focusing on God is required.

B. Humility.

1. The ego of man is the seed of pride that must be harnessed in a way to walk humbly before God. *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God,* Micah 6:8.
2. God’s nature is the same today. Although we might not bow our knee to an idol of wood, stone or a golden calf, swelling up in pride and self-sufficiency is idolatry in the eyes of God.
3. Pride is destructive because it reverses God’s law of love.
4. Greatest commandments: love God, love your neighbor, Matthew 22:35-40.
5. Pride comes into direct conflict with both of these ideas because it places man above God and neighbor.

6. Pride contradicts God's grace. One boasts of his own strength, rather than the mercy of God.
 7. The most horrifying sin of pride is that it robs God of the glory and praise which rightfully belong to Him alone.
 8. *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up*, James 4:10.
 9. The heart responds to what the ear hears.
 - a. Bow down the ear to what God says.
 - b. Many read the Bible with pre-conceptions of what God should have said.
 - c. If God says something different or challenging, the pre-conceived, insensitive heart **does not hear God**.
 10. *If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable*, Proverbs 28:9.
- C. Time and place.
1. Time is a creation of God as is the oak tree.
 2. James said *life is a mist that appears for a little while then vanishes*, James 4:14.
 3. We are encouraged to *work for the night is coming...work while it is day*, John 9:4.
 4. *Morning by morning you hear my voice*, Psalm 5:3a.
 5. Make the time to be alone with your heavenly Father in prayer, being the object of his knowledge and concern.
 6. *God's love and compassions are new every morning*, Lamentations 3:23.
 7. Place to **hear and be heard**.
 - a. Abraham in Ur of Chaldees, Genesis 12:1ff
 - b. Joseph in prison, Genesis 39:20
 - c. Moses at a burning bush, Exodus 3:4
 - d. Samuel in the tabernacle compound, I Samuel 3:10
 - e. Isaiah in the temple, Isaiah 6:8
 - f. Saul of Tarsus near Damascus Syria, Acts 9:4
 - g. Christian in your room, Matthew 6:6
- D. Quiet solitude.
1. *Be still and know that I am God*, Psalm 46:10.
 2. *My soul finds rest in God alone*, Psalm 62:1a.
 3. *Find rest, O my soul, in God alone*, Psalm 62:5.
 4. *Enjoy splendor and majesty in quietness*, Psalm 96:6-9.

CONCLUSION

1. One hears the voice of God with a sensitive heart.
2. One sees with eyes, believes with the mind – rational faith, and hears with the ear the voice of God.
3. *The Sovereign LORD...wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught*, Isaiah 50:4.
4. Disciples of Jesus never weary of speaking about that of which their hearts are full.
5. The clear expression of the new birth as the ultimate of positive truth will be echoed in assent and resisted by some in negation.
6. Perhaps one can never be sure after hearing the voice of God that He speaks the truth unless he has met opposition.
7. In the final consummation, the enemy will hear the voice of God one final time, never ever again.
8. We enjoy it now and forever! Amen!

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 6 – Faith As A Gift/Fruit

He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak, Isaiah 59:16-17

INTRODUCTION

1. Faith as depicted in the New Testament has principal forms or categories.
2. Each agrees with Hebrews 11:1.
 - a. Substance of things hoped for
 - b. Conviction of things not seen
3. Two principal forms of faith are:
 - a. Faith as a gift
 - b. Faith as a fruit

DISCUSSION

- I. Faith to Live By.
 - A. Faith is a continuing relationship linking the believer to God.
 1. Jesus visible, tangible, identity of invisible Jehovah.
 2. Faith is the way of connecting to (and with) the unseen realm.
 3. Faith is the central theme of the Christian message.
 - B. *But the righteous will live by his faith, Habakkuk 2:2 NIV.*
 1. *For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith', Romans 1:17.*
 2. *Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, 'The righteous will live by faith', Galatians 3:11.*
 3. *But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him, Hebrews 10:38.*
 4. *God is faithful. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful, I Corinthians 1:9.*
 5. Faith is the work of God. *Jesus answered, 'The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent,' John 6:29.*

6. *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, Hebrews 12:1-2.*

II. Faith As A Gift. *To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues, I Corinthians 12:8-10.*

A. *Have God's faith*, Mark 11:22.

1. This is a gift of power from God.
2. Faith does not have its origin in man but in God. Man did not create love.
3. This is an eternal quality of deity, an aspect of God's own eternal nature.
4. Through the gift of faith, the Holy Spirit imparts a portion of God's own faith.
5. This is faith on a divine level, as high above mere human faith as heavens are higher than earth.

B. The declaration, *Have God's faith*, was a challenge from Jesus to the disciples to accept and apply this just as he had done.

1. ...not only able to do, but it will be done, Mark 11:24.
2. ...the mountain be taken up and cast in the sea...it will happen, Matthew 21:21.

C. Jesus said "whoever," Mark 11:23.

1. Jesus set no limit to the scope of this kind of faith.
2. The phrases, "Whoever says" and "Whatever he says shall be granted", John 3:16, 15:1ff.
3. The issue; the nature of faith.
4. Luke 8:22-25
 - a. Normally wind and water are not under man's control.
 - b. Where is your faith?

- c. Jesus exercised the right kind of faith.
 - d. Disciples allowed external circumstances to open their hearts to fear, thus excluding, diluting or weakening their faith.
- D. Quality not quantity.
- 1. Different kind of storm, Matthew 17:20. Why?
 - 2. Because of the weakness of one's faith. *If one had faith as a mustard seed...nothing shall be impossible!*
 - 3. Mustard seed – measure of quality, Matthew 13:32
...smallest of all seeds....
 - 4. Not amount (quantity) but kind (quality).
 - 5. Power of words spoken to God in faith that he may be glorified, John 11:43.
 - 6. Original pattern for faith.
 - a. Creation itself, Genesis 1; Psalm 33:6, 9.
 - b. God's spoken word, energized by the Holy Spirit, was the effective agent in all creation.
- E. Ephesians 2:8-9; I Corinthians 12:9. *Charis*, grace; *Pisteuo*, faith; *Sesosmenoi*, saved; *Doron*, gift.
- F. Gift of faith in action.
- 1. An individual for a time is the channel of God's own faith.
 - 2. One must speak, act and perform.
 - 3. *The prayer of faith* often becomes a channel to restore the sick, James 5:15 (literal translation).
 - 4. Elijah's prayer of faith stopped, then started rain. Divine prerogative - a man of like passion, with a nature like us.
 - 5. Often manifests itself other than words (prayer).
 - 6. The divine urge to step out and walk on a level above oneself.
 - 7. *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines,* I Corinthians 12:11. According to sovereign will:
 - a. Jesus did not curse every fruitless fig tree.
 - b. Jesus did not still every tempest.
 - c. Jesus did not always walk on water.
 - d. Jesus left the will and glory to the Father.
 - 8. Gift of faith is not ours to command but is ours to use.
 - 9. God is more interested in quality than quantity of faith.

- III. Faith As Fruit. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, **faithfulness**, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law,* Galatians 5:22-23.
- A. Apple tree and Christmas tree.
 - 1. Apple tree bears fruit.
 - 2. Christmas tree bears gifts.
 - B. A gift is both attached to a Christmas tree and removed from it by a single, brief act.
 - 1. The gift may be a garment but is attached to a cedar or fir tree.
 - 2. There is no genetic relationship between the tree and the gift.
 - 3. The gift tells us nothing about the nature of the tree.
 - C. The apple tree is directly connected to the fruit it bears.
 - 1. The genetic makeup of the tree determines the nature and quality of the fruit.
 - 2. An orange will not grow naturally on an apple tree.
 - 3. Only healthy fruit is produced on a healthy tree.

Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them, Matthew 7:17-20.
 - D. The fruit of an apple is not produced by a single act.
 - 1. The result of slow, steady, nurture, growth and development.
 - 2. Quality fruit must be cultivated and pruned. It requires time, patience and the labor of the orchard keeper.
- IV. Spiritual Gifts.
- A. Imparted and received by a single brief conferring act.
 - 1. It tells us nothing about the nature of the one who confers.
 - 2. Gifts are given by the Holy Spirit.
 - B. Spiritual fruit expresses genetic makeup of life or source from which it emanates.
 - 1. It comes only as a result of growth.
 - 2. It takes a lifetime to achieve quality of relationship.

V. Analysis: Gifts Express Ability; Fruit Expresses Character.

A. Which is greater?

1. Why is character more important than gifts?
2. Paul said gifts are temporary, a means to an end, in order to “give glory to God.” At the same time gifts are God’s means of shaping one’s character in righteousness for eternity.

B. Character is permanent.

1. This is where the quality of faith enters.
2. When a man kind of faith is the only dimension employed in life, the result is less than the God kind of faith.
3. Our intellect wars against the simplicity of faith.
4. Types of faith. Seed important.

CONCLUSION

1. The “gift of faith” is the seed.
2. The “fruit of faith” is the result of one’s cooperation or journey with God.
3. The character one develops while here will determine his character eternally.
4. One day these wonderful gifts will be left behind; our character will remain in place forever.
5. Very important: Do not choose one over the other. God’s gifts do not exclude God’s fruit. God’s fruit does not exclude God’s gifts. They complement each other. The gifts of God provide practical development and expression of character.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 6 – Faith As A Fruit/Gift
Option 1 - Temporary (Provisional Faith)

INTRODUCTION

1. *By faith we understand that the worlds were created by the Word (voice) of God, Hebrews 11:1.*
2. Provisional – “Provided for present need or for the occasion, having a provisional or temporary character”. Webster, pg. 1450
3. Eternal – “Everlasting, perpetual, never stopping, existing at all times without change; that which is eternal has neither beginning nor end; that which is endless has a beginning but no end; that which is everlasting has neither interruption nor cessation.” Webster, pg. 627

DISCUSSION

I. Review Module 3.

A. Faith as a fruit/gift.

1. Fruit is described as character – permanent.
2. Gifts – described as temporary. There may be a difference in talents and gifts.

B. *Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, I Corinthians 13:8-9.*

II. Explanation of Text.

A. That which is here ascribed to faith is the instrumental cause.

1. By faith, where faith is spoken of as the instrumental cause of anything, it always takes in or includes its object as the principal cause of the same thing.
2. So where it is said that we are ‘justified by faith’, it includes Christ and his righteousness as the principle cause of our justification. Faith is the means by which righteousness is obtained.

3. “ Where it is said that ‘by faith we understand that the worlds were framed’ includes its object, namely the divine revelation that is made thereof in the Word of God...by faith we assent unto the divine revelation of it.” Exposition to the Hebrews, Dr. John Owen Volume VII, pg. 16, Original 1671, Reprinted 1980, Baker Book House.
 - B. The same object of our faith (God), who affirmed both origin and existence before man’s physical presence on earth by the same means assures us of realities beyond all existence on this planet.
 - C. *Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin*, Romans 14:23b.
- III. *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*, Hebrews 12:2.
- A. *Who for faith set before them...*
 1. By faith Abel
 2. By faith Enoch
 3. By faith Noah
 4. By faith Abraham
 5. By faith Isaac
 6. By faith Jacob
 7. By faith Joseph
 - B. *These were all commended for their faith*, Hebrews 11:39a.
- IV. The Temporal Becomes Eternal.
- A. Description
 1. Nature of saving faith. *Hupostasis* gives subsistence to the human spirit of things believed.
 2. Herein lays the difference between saving faith and the temporary persuasion of convinced persons.
 3. The latter has no foundation in them to produce proper eternal effects or results.
 4. Temporary faith cannot produce ultimate fruit.
 5. Sin will not be mortified, but rather secretly encouraged at given times because it is natural for people of corrupt minds to conclude that they may continue in sin because grace does abound.

- B. True faith acts on the promise and is also said to receive it.
 - 1. By faith one receives the Word.
 - 2. It becomes incorporated into the heart.
- C. Faith rests alone on the authority of God.
 - 1. God speaks in Scripture and that is the foundation upon which divine faith rest and is to be resolved into "He saith."
 - 2. The author of Hebrews makes clear that the object of their faith is the single authority of the Messiah.
 - 3. As faith is an act of religious obedience, it respects the authority of God who requires it.
- D. Ideas for future study:
 - 1. Faith – Person of Christ.
 - 2. Faith – Necessary in approaching God.
 - 3. Faith – Great duty.
 - 4. Faith – Relation to promises of God.
 - 5. Faith – Engrafted word into the spirit.
 - 6. Faith – Basis for tasting the promises of God.
 - 7. Faith – Basis of experiencing first fruits of all promised.
 - 8. Faith – Basis for repentance.
 - 9. Faith – Efficacy for all ages.
 - 10. Faith – Confirmed by prayer.
 - 11. Faith – As it relates to endurance.
 - 12. Faith – Ultimate objective, salvation of the soul, I Peter 1:9.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Faith made him Jesus.
- 2. Evangelism is man's work, but the gift of faith is God's work.
- 3. May we present the person of Christ along side the saving work of Christ.
- 4. *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5:1.*

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 6 – Faith As A Gift/Fruit
Option 2 – With God All Things Are Possible

INTRODUCTION

1. Nothing ideally is impossible, Mark 9:23.
2. One's power is limited by his thought.
3. Faith is another word for the might of God in your spirit.
4. Faith is the eye of the spirit.
5. The Bible is the glass through which faith looks as it responds to God and sees other worlds.

DISCUSSION

- I. The act proceeds simultaneously from the intellect to the heart/will of God.
 - A. The intellect receives the unseen object as a fact.
 1. Genesis 18:10; Romans 4:17b.
 2. The heart embraces the object extending to the understanding (puts the mind around the object), Romans 4:18f.
 - B. His will resigns to the truth before him, meaning God will provide.
 1. Abraham was *fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. That is why his faith was reckoned to him as righteousness*, Romans 4:21-22.
 2. This places the heart at the disposal of the object and conquers its affection.

CONCLUSION

1. If one dreamed a tree was falling across his bed, his response might be to leap out of the bed to get out of the path of danger. If one were sitting in a room and a rattlesnake began making his threatening but certain "rattling" sound, one would react immediately to move out of harm's way.
2. These two illustrations give some insight to the process or working of faith. First there is the thought of danger. If that is the only reaction in the first case the dream would pass. But in the second illustration, if one only thought about the snake's presence and that is all, it is very likely he would be bitten.

3. There is some action and reaction that is completely instinctive. The migration of birds and herds of wild animals move for procreation and preservation reasons. God gave them the ability as to where and when to go, even the first time, as surely as they know what to do when they arrive. There is no faith when birds or herds “leave, not knowing where they are going.” In Abraham’s case what was the difference? Hebrews 11:8.
4. The “*homo sapiens*” shares a physical body and inhabits a corporeal earth with all other physical existence. For example, a lion and lioness do not plan or “emotionally” anticipate the arrival of their offspring as humans do. People are different. The difference is our capacity for faith and the use of it. This separates us from all other life on this planet.
5. The ability to believe in God is the most distinctive quality of the human being. If man fails to utilize this gift in the fullest measure he is not even a good animal. We cannot compete with other life on this planet in flying, swimming, climbing, running, etc. **Faith in God is our greatest attainment.**

NOTES
Module 6 – Faith As A Gift/Fruit

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Matthew 5:11-12

INTRODUCTION

1. A matter of “when,” not “if.”
2. Psalm 34:19 NIV *A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all.*
3. Psalm 119:67 NIV *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word.*

DISCUSSION

- I. The Supreme Example of Adversity.
 - A. Christ’s attitude of faith.
 1. No Gethsemane
 2. No Calvary
 - B. Great trials become necessary preparation for great duties.
 - C. It is finished. “God had one son on earth without sin but never one without suffering.” St. Augustine.
- II. Adversity - God’s Redemptive Doorway.
 - A. Illustration of Joseph, Genesis 39-48.
 - B. Illustration of Job, Job 1-2.
- III. The Capacity for Pain/The Capacity for Joy.
 - A. Luke 7:47 *He that loves much forgives much.*
 - B. Romans 8:17 *We share in his sufferings and then share in his glory.*

CONCLUSION

1. “God washes the eyes by tears until they can behold the invisible land where tears shall come no more.” Henry Ward Beecher.
2. Human flesh alone could not beget Jesus, but all sinful flesh may receive him.
3. The journey of faith is the means of receiving Christ, the privilege to become the children of God, John 1:12; I John 3:1-2.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Option 1 – God’s Answer to Adversity

The celebration near the end of each calendar year is one of the greatest of all times to put love in action and bring souls to Christ. At that time of year, people seem to be more open to spiritual ideas and values. Love and faith are two pillars upon which all goodness rests.

Luke 2:13-14 NIV the word of God speaks, *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.’* The idea is expressed in present tense.

Notice these angels were praising God for a particular reason. They were praising God because peace was being declared between God and man, between heaven and earth. They were making this declaration at Bethlehem when Jesus was born, not thirty-three years later after he died. How could peace be declared between God and man before Jesus faced one human test of life, before he faced one temptation, before any battle for the souls of men had been fought, or even one person healed by his miracles? How could God send the angels to say such things when the actual battle for our redemption was still thirty-three years away?

By faith, that is how! The same faith that in the beginning spoke to nothing, and it became something, our created earth with all that is in it. And it was good! By the same faith that caused one of the three angels who came to Abraham in Genesis 18:1,10 (one of many pre-Bethlehem appearances of Jesus, Micah 5:2) to state as a matter of fact, *that in about a year I will surely return to you and your wife will have a son.* Abraham praised God that day. He gave glory to God that day because his God *calls things which be not as though they already were,* Romans 4:17b.

Isaiah 4:1-6 NIV *In that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, 'We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace!' In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire. Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over all the glory will be a canopy. It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.* Jehovah God had already set his faith on man's redemption as he did on the birth of Isaac. The fact that one event was twelve months away and the other thirty-three years away made no difference to him. Insofar as God was concerned, it was already done. He began treating people like they had never sinned. He reached out to them in great love. According to what the angels said, God offered himself to man as though Jesus had already gone to the cross. Because of God's faith and love, everything turned out right. Jesus won every ultimate battle and thwarted Satan's many temptations and attacks. In the process he "went into the strong man's house and bound him." In other words he took mankind (potentially) from Satan's authority and dominion.

With that in mind, I want you to think about this, if God acted as though the work of the cross was already completed before Jesus ever went to the cross, how do you think he is acting now regarding your life and mine? He is acting as though we were already in glory. *We have been raised up together with Christ, and seated with him in heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,* Ephesians 2:6. It looks as if, in the Fathers' mind, you and I are already there. When I was younger, this was a difficult passage. It was as though I was reading it incorrectly. We need to start living as though we are already seated with our Lord in glory!

My prayer is that in this body, in our time, we look at one another in Christ Jesus and treat one another like we are already in heaven. If we will, or when we do, or better still as we continue to “heaven will come down and glory will fill our souls!” After all, we all look a whole lot better and act a whole lot better in Jesus than any other way. Like Jesus, may we look to others to serve, care for, pray for, instead of waiting for someone to do something great for us. We can give gifts in life that cannot be bought over a counter, or paid for with a credit card, or be wrapped in beautiful paper and neatly tied with a ribbon. We can give joy, harmony and love. When things have gone wrong between you and a friend, release that wrong to God. Free yourself from the chains of pain, guilt and heartbreak. It is our responsibility to act appropriately, whether the one who caused harm has done so or not. Your offender must face God on the matter. Pray to God who hears and answers our prayers. He is faithful to us! We must be faithful to him!

Finally, embrace the spirit of joy. As the song declares, “Joy to the world,” or more specifically, another, “Joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart today, down in my heart to stay.” Sit back and enjoy your seat beside our Savior in glory! Amen!

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Option 2 - The Trial of Faith I
Romans 5:1ff; I Peter 4:11ff

INTRODUCTION

1. Some of the greatest impacts are made not when succeeding but when failing, not when laughing but when crying.
2. One must learn to face and handle all forms of adversity-- shocks, suffering, difficulty, disaster and undeserved treatment.
3. It is important to realize that in this maturing process these tragedies are not isolated happenings in themselves.
4. The most important factor is **the effect we allow them to have.**

DISCUSSION

- I. The Reality of Trials.
 - A. Jesus, disciples, and a storm were all in the same boat, Luke 8.
 1. *In this world you will have trouble*, John 16.
 2. This is contrary to traditional thinking.
 3. “God, if you loved me you would not allow this to happen.
 - B. . . . **when persecution arises** . . . , Matthew 13:21.
- II. Faith Tested, Romans 5:1-11.
 - A. Use of the word exult.
 1. Used three times.
 2. Excited, joyful anticipation.
 - B. Exult in hope, verse 2.
 - C. Exult in tribulations, verse 3.
 - D. Exult in God, verse 11.
- III. The Pattern of Testing, James 1:2ff.
 - A. Count our trials as joy.
 - B. Often my disappointment is God’s appointment for me.
- IV. Tested by Fire, I Peter 1:5ff.
 - A. Gold, purified by fire in a furnace, I Peter 4:12-13.
 - B. The refiner, Malachi 3:2-3; Proverbs 25:4.
 - C. Isaiah 48:10; Zechariah 13:9; Jeremiah 6:30.

CONCLUSION

1. The value of metal cannot be measured until it passes the test of fire.
2. *I have prayed that your faith will not fail*, Luke 22:32.
3. Pressures seem unbearable.
4. Do not abandon your faith under pressure.
5. Illustration of instinct in animals.
6. Capacity for faith in man.
7. *But he knows the way I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold*, Job 23:10.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Option 3 - The Trial of Faith II

These lessons should cause us to contemplate ways to apply principles of faith to life and do some things by faith that might be a little different from what you have done in the past. They should cause us to think of the church. What are some things we can do as Christians if we *walk by faith and not by sight*. That is not to indict anyone, it is not to tell one what to do; it is just to exhort us as we think on these things.

I Peter 1:3-7 NIV Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith, of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire, may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

The trial of faith, the role of temptations, difficulties, obstacles in our path, broken down health, wrecked relationships, failed business, a messed up economy, recession, depression -- how is a Christian to act under these adverse circumstances? Is living the Christian life only a fair weather philosophy? Do we expect life to be a bed of roses? Can't I be spared? We are moving into a difficult area regarding the providence of God and the trial of faith. The Bible calls the trial of faith precious and in the end we are assured of a good outcome, a victory! *This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, I John 5:3-5.*

We sing, "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world." We like to win. We want to be on the winning side. We enjoy breakthroughs, spiritual and otherwise. But some people are not there because sin prevails in their life. Sin is perilous. This is a very general statement, but a very true one. Especially is sin perilous in days of prosperity because it makes us think we are winning when we are losing. The most difficult cup to carry is not the one that is empty but the one that is full. Deuteronomy 8:18a NIV says *...it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.* One of the worst curses to deal with is to be left unchecked in the folly of one's own sin pursuing it without the grace of God and without a faithful relationship with him.

David Lord George once said, "The most dangerous thing in the world is to try to leap a chasm in two jumps." This describes a man's relationship to God in faith matters. Are we like the little boy who thought if he cut off the tail of his puppy an inch at a time it wouldn't hurt as badly? There are some things that do not happen like that! I am not talking about the presuppositional apologetics of William James or the liberal philosophers and theologians who say of all the options of the human mind, faith in God has fewer obstacles when I speak of crossing a chasm, a leap of faith, a jump in the dark. The Christian walks by faith and not by sight. It is not a leap in the dark to walk by faith. Faith and the Holy Spirit are the substitute for Deity as we walk in this world. Hebrews 11:6, *without faith it is impossible to please God.* We have talked about saving faith as a commitment to Christ; we have talked about the source of faith, the word (*Rhema*) of God, and the receptacle of faith that wins, the human heart.

Scripture warns that faith will be tested. "Oh," we say, "Lord, must it be?" God says that he scourges the son that he loves, that he chastises. There is no earthly father who truly loves his child that does not discipline him. Parents who say they love their children too much to correct them are either naive or unable to understand the outcome of that choice. God chastens the son that he loves.

Some go for several years in their Christian life enjoying relative calm. Sooner or later John 16:33b *In this world you will have trouble* over takes tranquility. Faith is going to be tested. We cry out in the night; we cry out in the day; we are brought to our knees. It is a mistake to see that as a sign from God that he does not love you. Some have been known to say, "Lord, if you loved me, you wouldn't let this happen to me!" Consider this, it may very well be a sign of God's ownership, a very real indication that rather than disliking you, he loves you very much. *God disciplines those whom he loves*. In fact, he loves you so much he even gave Jesus to die.

Does the parent who disciplines a child with love and purpose love his child less than the parent who is misguided and manipulated? Get the picture? And so it is with God. Instead of mourning when understanding does not come, look for what God is doing. An old song comes to mind, "Tempted and tried, we're oft made to wonder, why it should be thus all the day long, while there are others living about us, never molested though in the wrong. Farther along we'll understand why. Not now, but in the coming years, it may even be in a better land, we will read the meaning of our tears. Someday we will understand. Someday we will catch that broken cord and finish what we here began, in a better land, up there we'll understand."

This is hard. *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance*, James 1:2. Those who persevere in pain are then mature and complete, not lacking anything. However, there are two kinds of folks, those who are cowards and run off the field or the brave who stand firm and denounce the foe, Satan. The latter takes faith and courage! We do not have the strength to withstand Satan's attacks. We are given strength from God because of our faith in him. Don't ever forget--God is God, no matter what!!

There will be a time in your life when you must be content to let faith be faith. There is no explanation for what is happening and the end or outcome cannot be seen. These are the times when strength is drawn from God who gives assurance of his love and care. *Cast your cares upon the Lord. For he cares for you!*

Bring your burdens to the Lord and let him bear them! Do not try to carry them on your own because you are not that strong. God has not promised us freedom from pain and sorrow, but he has promised to be with us. Some have been hurt and burned so many times they do not trust anyone, not even God. They are often the ones who hit bottom.

We have already talked about the high and noble echelons of faith. We even touched on a few of the mountain tops. This issue is where the rubber meets the road. This is where many, in the language of scripture, *go out from among us because they are not of us*. Several years ago when I was on the faculty of a Christian college, I addressed a group of young preachers. We were in a classroom and I had them all stand, a row at a time. I then asked the other class members to look at them and I said, "Ten years from now only one out of ten of you men standing will be in full time ministry." I know what went through their minds. "Oh no, not me!" But for one reason or another, something happens to change our course. Then, I said, "the depth of one's faith will be put to the test!"

As a young man with much energy, I had enjoyed many successes. Then suddenly I had three ministries back to back that fell apart. The first was in a large mid-western city. After a short period of time, just as things appeared to be going well, it was over; the end brought on from a most unlikely source. The pain was deep--we had made a serious commitment to God in that church. It was tough. I grieved and was bitter, but I had enough foundation from the faith of a mother and a father and grandparents that I knew the word was not wrong, but the man was wrong. The second disappointment was just as unexpected and painful. And I said, "Lord, this can't happen to me!" Each fiasco involved relocating school age children and great financial loss and was a burden on all the family. After the third collapse, I began to look into my own life. Since God had blessed me with other ministries that we call successes, it was inspection time! God put this boy in his lathe. He had my attention! Like Jonah I asked for directions to Nineveh! I now regard those difficult disappointments in my life as God's way of refocusing my direction! Growing out of those struggles, I began to seriously study and develop the prayer ministry and consequently the

Prayer and Fasting Seminars. I believe that God can now trust me with whatever ministry he chooses to give to me. When God puts us in his lathe, he is going to reshape us into something he can use. I regard my disappointments as appointments I had to keep. You have experienced similar disappointments. Many of you could stand here beside me and disclose your valley times. The details would be different, but the pain is the same.

God threw Jonah right out in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. A big fish swallowed him and he stayed there for three days before it spit him out on the bank. I can imagine there was seaweed over his ear, maybe some hanging out of his mouth. I have read the story many times and it was not until recently that I saw that picture! Suppose that a little while after the fish vomited Jonah out on the bank, seaweed still in his hair, a fellow walking along the beach might ask, "Where have you been?" Jonah's reply, "If I told you, you wouldn't believe it!" God has ways to get our attention. Often when God plans to use us, we must first pass through fire. It will hit you right across the face in some amazing ways and from sources you will not expect, one thing in my life, another thing in your life.

There are two kinds of tests. One is when difficult things happen; illness, accident, failed relationship, financial disaster, etc. The agent that God uses to test us is Satan. That must be understood. Look at Job. God and Job had a big business going. Satan called Job a hypocrite and God a liar. Some of the most serious dialogue in the Bible is found in the first two chapters of the book of Job. Think about Job, a man suffering loss of his children and everything he had. Yet he kept his faith in God even when his wife turned against him and said, "Man, curse God. At least you can die!" He called her a foolish woman.

Look at something difficult but spectacular. Job had a relationship with God based on who he was and not what he had. When the devil took everything Job had, he still maintained who he was because his relationship with God was not built on the things God had given him. All Job lost was his job. God stood the loss. That is a quality, a level, I can only dream of! I am just a child studying these things with you. Isn't that a challenging way to look at Job's stewardship? He lost his job; God stood the loss.

One day each of us will stand before God with nothing but what we are, stripped of everything we have ever owned or held in our hands. If our faith is based on the control of possessions and they are lost, then what? During the Great Depression many took their life when the economy eroded and their material possessions were gone. How much of your relationship with God is based on the things that God has given you? If God suddenly chose in his Sovereignty to deprive you of everything you have, would you continue to sing his praise or would you follow Job's wife's suggestion and curse God? Answer this hard question! That's where we have come to in this study.

Remember Joseph was in jail twenty years and did not deserve a day of it. Could I have stayed in jail for twenty years and not resented God? I don't know. Think of Paul and Silas sitting in jail at midnight, not deserving any of that disgrace. I can hear one of them saying, "If you had not preached so powerfully, this would not have happened!" Do you think Paul and Silas said that to each other? "If you had not been so hard on those sinners, this would not have happened! Have we said, "God if you loved me, you wouldn't let this happen to me!" At midnight I imagine that Paul reached over to Silas and asked, "Oh Silas, do you love Jesus?" And I hear Silas say, "Oh, yes, I love Jesus." They did not rail against what they were going through. They counted it an honor to suffer. That is different from the way I am. I long to be content in "whatever state I find myself." They actually rejoiced that they could suffer for the Lord.

Most people grieve when they do not understand suffering. Habakkuk prayed when he could not understand. I recommend that! Some time ago, a very dear friend of mine died. We shared a mutual affection. He was my brother in Christ. He was an older man than I but we were friends. His kidneys were failing and the poison in his system was ravaging his body and mind. The last time I saw him which was during his last two weeks, he told me "I have gotten to know my Lord like I have never known him before." My friend had never made prayer a priority--until he suffered. During those last two weeks, he understood. He was not doing the "now I lay me down to sleep" kind of praying. He was not praying for salvation. He knew he was going to heaven. He came to know the Lord in a personal way.

Habakkuk prayed when he could not understand. The Bible says that trials are precious because they work patience. To the man of the world, that does not make sense. According to nature when something frustrates our plans, impatience is generated. However, that misses the fruit of experience and sours into hopelessness. When the heart of faith renewed by the Holy Spirit does produce its work, it involves patience. The angels now in the presence of God cannot exhibit patience because they are removed from the realm of suffering. If patience is a part of building Christian character, and patience can only be learned in suffering, then do you see why the trial of faith is important? It is one of those phenomena that moves us into spiritual shape so we will not be spiritual misfits in heaven.

Our stay here on this earth is but a testing period to condition and shape us for the New Heaven and New Earth. One of those character-building qualities that I must develop is patience. The Bible says the way that happens is through trials. Job did not learn patience through prosperity but as he sat in the ashes. Maybe that explains why too many of us are so impatient, we have had too much success. The Bible says that man shall not live by bread alone, nor by success alone. Do you know what is under the cloudless sky? The Sahara Desert! It is the searching mists and the black storm clouds that bring the rains and that make our hillsides and valleys green with flowering plants and fertile pastures.

God cannot tolerate a life of only successes because of the kind of person that would produce. Complete success is likely to give a man so much pride that he would not give God the glory, and be puffed up. *Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked* is from beautiful Hebrew poetry in Moses' song. What does it mean? When Jacob enjoyed prosperity, his neck became thick and calloused; and the more he received, the more he wanted. It is difficult for our giving to keep up with our getting. That is a problem of genuine stewardship.

We have many examples where the trial of faith produces patience, a pearl often found in the deep seas of affliction. The grace of God goes into the depths of the sea of problems and trouble and brings it to the surface, then puts it around the neck of

the faithful as a gem. Patience works experience the Bible says, and experience hope. How wonderfully does the divine alchemy bring out the base materials of the baser metals of sin and unbelief from our lives! The more by faith endured, the more proof of the truthfulness of God. The more you prove his love, the more you show his faithfulness. The more you perceive his wisdom, the more you are becoming like him. You who have never endured serious trial and difficulty may believe in the sustaining power of God's grace, but you do not have the experience of it. It is not until you go to sea; and in the storm, you learn the skill of the pilot. Some of us have been in that storm more than others. But we do not cry out, "God, if you loved me, you would not let this happen", which is our first human tendency. Rather than looking upon the trial as a disappointment, look at it as God's appointment for you to keep. Ask God to allow you to keep that appointment as when life was going well.

In America we are failures at failure! We have enjoyed so much success that we do not know how to respond when something happens that does not go exactly as planned. It is not until a man or woman meets God in failure that we know who we really are. What is the cross of Jesus except where I meet God in my sin and acknowledge that I am a sinner who deserves to go to hell? That is who we are! In our western culture we do not want the label of failure.

God sets to music the flow of floodwater of trouble and out of the foam of the sea of sorrow, he causes to arise a bright spirit of hope. The trial of faith! Moses was a man of tremendous courage and nobility of purpose. He had led those murmuring people for forty years. Yet God said to Moses, "You shall not go over!" You talk about sorrow and disappointment! "But, Lord, I have put up with". "I know all that, but you are not going." And we think we have had some hopes ruined and some plans upset! One hundred and twenty years of that good man's life had been spent listening to God. He was on the peak of Pisgah in the Nebo chain looking at the Promised Land but was not allowed to enter.

Moses wanted more than anything else in his life to go to the Promised Land. But he was shut out. Where do you see him in death? Matthew 17:2-11 and Mark 9:2-8 tell of Moses at the

Mount of Transfiguration which was likely west of the Sea of Galilee. The Mount of Transfiguration is in the heart of the land of promise, and on the mountain were Moses, Elijah and Jesus, no doubt talking about death, Luke 9:31. Where do I see Moses in death? I see him where he wanted to be in life! He had to die to get there, and so will we. This is a marvelous story, a story of hope. He accomplished something in death he could not do in life.

The life of faith is exciting. It is the real romance in this world. It grows and keeps growing, never coming to an end. A man's faith increases in God until one day he steps out of his body of flesh in death and holds to God and has everything!

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 - The Adventure of Adversity
Option 4- Trial of Faith – III
Matthew 13:3-8; 18-23

INTRODUCTION

1. The Parable of the sower is significant for a variety of valuable truths.
2. No theme is more important than the study of the trial of faith.

DISCUSSION

- I. Categories of Life.
 - A. The wayside never really received the message in an effective measure.
 - B. Good ground received seed and was productive, some 100, 60, 30 fold.
 - C. Rocks and thorns infested a soil that received the seed, but the struggle for survival was too great. The conditions for producing good, enduring fruit were not adequate. The rocks and thorns failed the test of faith.
- II. Receptivity Compared and Contrasted.
 - A. Both received same word as good ground.
 - B. The rocky soil was shallow. There is need for depth in the word of God. Allow the inspired message to penetrate deep into your heart.
 - C. Matthew 13:22. The thorns are not persecution but a concern for worldly cares, riches and pleasures.
 - a. Pressures from peer group
 - b. Human popularity
 - c. Materialistic success may choke faith
- III. Two Tests.
 - A. When life is easy.
 - B. When life is difficult.
 - a. Moses
 - b. Joseph

CONCLUSION

1. Both **triumph** and **disaster** are two imposters. **Treat them the same.**
2. Jesus was welcomed in triumphal entry.
3. One week later, they cried, "Crucify him".
4. Do not be too elated by success, and do not be too cast down by failure.
5. Distance between earth's darkest day (crucifixion) and brightest day (resurrection) was only three days apart.
6. Faith, as it stands the test, develops a perspective.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Option 5 - The Trial of Faith IV
Romans 5:1-11

Earlier I said it is easier to pray than to believe. You now have a better idea of what is meant by the word believe. Faith must be tested. In Romans 5:1-11 NAS, speaking about a faith relationship with God through Christ, Paul uses exult three times. To exult means to boast. This is a strong word denoting a confidence that actually causes one to boast. In verse 2 Paul says *We exult in hope of the glory of God*. That is not too difficult to understand if we really believe we are heirs of God's glory and will share with him throughout eternity. It is natural to express excitement and joyful anticipation. *We exult in hope of the glory of God*.

In verse 3 Paul uses precisely the same word when he says, *And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations*. We boast in our troubles. That seems impossible at first thought. Who could ever imagine exulting in tribulation, in hardship, in persecution, in loneliness? More often we feel sorry for ourselves and have a pity party, saying "nobody listens to me, nobody loves me and nobody would cry if I died." Imagine exulting in tribulations of poverty, sickness, loss or bereavement. Why should God expect us to boast in troubles? Fortunately Paul gives the reason, which is *tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us*.

To sum up Paul's answer -- when tribulation is received from God and endured in faith, it results in our character development that cannot occur otherwise. Pray for perseverance, to keep on keeping on, which leads to character development. Be the steady fellow in the boat who is the same day in and day out which leads to hope. There are things the Bible tells us that come because of tribulation. Analyzing this in detail, we find Paul lists stages.

The succession of stages of character development are:

1. Perseverance, endurance, staying with it, sticking-to-it.
2. Proven character, strength of character, a mature character, God's approval, proof we have stood the test, related to the metal that has been in the smelting pot, the crucible.
3. Hope, a steady hope, not day dreaming, God's way of translating something you would like to see come to pass into reality, strong, serene, confident, an expectation of good that will ultimately result from the process of testing.
4. God's love poured out in your heart, not a disappointment but that, which far exceeds anything you, could ever expect.

Romans 5:11 NAS is Paul's third use of the word exult. *And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.* Here again we have a divine objective. God is not satisfied that our joy or our confidence should rest merely in what he has done for us no matter how wonderful his blessing. God's purpose is that we should find our final and highest satisfaction in nothing and no one but himself. The purpose for this step-by-step process is that your life and mine should have its highest and ultimate satisfaction in no one but God. If you enjoy the things of the flesh and the world more and enjoy God less and less, I can tell you the direction you are going is a wrong one.

In flesh we will always need love, rest, food, drink, etc. As we move nearer God, these things become less important until a mature, yet older and weaker body finally steps out of this clay into the hands of God. It is a sad commentary of our time for a three score and ten to envy a teenager. Instead an eighteen year old should envy the serenity and calmness and the wisdom of the white haired person. Too many people are hung up on the now and now for the sweet by and by to have any real meaning. On the other hand, there are people who think only in terms of the sweet by and by rather than today. There are two sides to it. The sweeter now is, the sweeter the by and by will be!

Without the process of character development this could not happen. It is a sure mark of spiritual maturity when God alone becomes both the source of your deepest joy and the object of your highest devotion. It is interesting to compare Romans 5 with I Corinthians 13, the great love chapter. Paul shows us in Romans the way to enter into that fullness of divine love is by perseverance or endurance. In I Corinthians 13:7 he tells us love is the only thing strong enough to endure any test. When you put truth together it fits like a divine mosaic, each piece being in its place. Love bears, believes, hopes, endures all things. Therefore Scripture forges a bond. Letting the Bible be its own commentary is the sound way to teach. It thus forges a bond that cannot be broken between love and endurance. If love does not remain, maybe it was not genuine love at all. If it is love, it will remain, grow, develop, and build.

We are promised troubles so do not be surprised when they come. There will be storms on the house. The house that was built on the rock did not give the rock strength; but the rock gave the house strength. That is the difference between the sand and the rock; they both were fine as long as the sailing was smooth. But when the storm came, that was the test. We all do well when we are enjoying days of prosperity, but what happens when the difficulties come along?

In Romans 5 Paul presents faith, hope, and love as three successive phases of Christian experience. Faith leads to hope, and hope leads to love. I Corinthians 13:13 presents the same qualities in the same order; but he emphasizes that while each is of permanent value, love is that fertile soil out of which every Christian value springs.

Look at II Corinthians 3:18 NIV *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit* "with ever-increasing glory", an escalating process, from faith to hope, and from hope to love, from glory to glory. Envision that here. No doubt that is what it means.

The concept of faith being tested is introduced by the author in James 1:2-4 NIV *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.* While Paul tells us to exult or boast in tribulations, James tells us to count it all joy when we have trials. These are not just idle words from the Scripture.

Consider the phrase “tested by fire.” Like Paul and James, Peter gives fore warning of the trial of faith, saying that our faith must undergo trial. I Peter 1:5 describes Christians as those who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. It is only through faith that God’s power can work effectively in our life. Therefore, continuing faith is an essential requirement to allow your faith to endure even in the darkest night when you cannot see the dawn. Know the God who made the darkness also made the dawn.

A woman stood by an open grave over her young husband who was one of the finest elders I have ever known. Conducting that funeral a few years ago, I was a witness to an untimely death of a man too young to die. He was my friend. Over that open grave his wife said to me as we stood arm in arm, “There is the body of my husband, the means of my support, the father of my two daughters. There also lies the will of God and for me, God’s will is the perfection of all human reason.”

We are talking about being tested by fire. Peter compares the testing of our faith to the way gold was purified in his day, which was in a furnace of fire! He brings this up again in I Peter 4:12-13 NIV *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.* Do not think when persecution comes your way that God has forgotten you. We are sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Peter assures us that testing of this kind is an essential part of the Christian life. Crucial for the purifying of faith just as fire is essential to purifying gold. And he exhorts us to keep on rejoicing. As already pointed out, that is the verb form of I Peter 4:13. Malachi 3:2-3 NIV talks about it. This prophet paints a vivid picture of the long awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ, his coming and dealing with the people as a refiner deals with gold and silver. *But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness.*

When passing through the fiery ordeal, one may interpret this *as some strange thing happening*. We do not want to suffer. We do not want to be inconvenienced. We were reared to get what we want when we want it. We don't do well with "no". It was unexpected. Let's face it, it is not the nature of trials and testing to warn you ahead of time! The phone rings, and life will never be the same again. The doorbell rings and you receive news you had no idea was coming. You may say, "Oh, if only I had known!" That is not the nature of trials. They often come suddenly. On the other hand, because we have been warned by Scripture expect it. Trust God to move you through the valley and bring you out on the other side. In the midst of trial and loss, be thankful for what is left; which is more than was taken away.

In purifying gold and silver, the refiner of Bible times suspended the metal in a metal pot over the hottest fire he could generate. A fire was usually built in some variety of a clay oven. Billows fanned the flame for maximum heat. As the metal seethed in the pot, the dross would come to the top with its impurities and would separate from the metal. Then the refiner would skim the slag. Proverbs 25:4 is very similar. This process continued until all the impurities were out, and nothing but the refined metal was left.

Metals that pass through the furnace are refined, creating recognized value. Metals that fail the test are rejected. Contrast that with the vine and the branches - some are cut off and some are left. In Jeremiah 6:30 Israel is called "rejected silver,"

worthless metal. The severe, repeated judgments of God failed to refine them. That very process is going on in the western hemisphere today. In the New Testament James, Peter and Paul all emphasized the trial through which we pass is the means by which our faith is tested. This is the metal of supreme value that cannot be accepted until it has passed the test of fire.

Trial and suffering become the crucible in which God refines and purifies his people until they meet his requirements to do his work. It took God fifteen hundred years to get his people conditioned to receive the Messiah. We too are in a testing process, an ongoing procedure. Various Old Testament prophets apply this picture beautifully to the remnant of Israel who was destined to survive God's judgments and be restored to his favor. Isaiah 48:10 NIV is one passage that addresses this matter. See, *I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.* Zechariah 13:9 NIV says *This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'*

Do we now at least intellectually understand a little more about why troubles come our way? Sometimes it is by our own foolishness; sometimes it is the will of God. Rather than the trial being a sign that God is disowning us, it is a sign that he owns us. As William Penn said, "To complain is to repine at the Creator." It doesn't change the trials. Disappointments have been turning points in the lives of many people. Victor Hugo was banished to the Isle of Guernsey at the age of forty-eight and he thought it was his ruin. While there he was inspired to write *Les Miserables* which some regard as one of the most noble representations of literature ever written. Might I ask the question, was his disappointment an appointment?

Paul's thorn in the flesh and many other hardships we could recite, were appointments to be kept. I have referred to some in my life and I know there are those in your life. Were these times of triumph or failure? God does not ignore or forget about you. If you fail one, perhaps you will pass another. God begins a process of refining until suitable for the work he wants you to do. When he

can trust you, he will accomplish through you something no one else can do. Each person is unique to God. We do not compete. I do not threaten your position in the kingdom, and you do not threaten mine because there is room for all.

Recall the last supper when Jesus warned Peter he was going to deny the Lord. In this context he said to him in Luke 22:32-34 NIV *'But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.'* But he replied, *'Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.'* Jesus answered, *'I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.'* Jesus Christ said to one of his hand picked apostles that he had prayed for him that his faith would not fail. The impending pressures and weaknesses in Peter's character, his failure in that hour was inevitable. However, everything was not going to be lost. The way would still be open for Peter to return; on one condition, that his faith not fail. Peter's greatest ministry came after failure! Mistake, sin, is a part of humanity. As long as faith is not robbed, you will recover. Look at the difference between Judas and Peter. Each of them betrayed the Lord. They both sinned. What was different? Judas lost his faith and perished. Peter repented and was rescued.

Similar things happen today. There are times when we make mistakes. The test seems unbearable. In fact like Peter, we may yield temporarily. But everything is not lost. God still loves you even in your failure. No wonder faith is called precious! It is infinitely more valuable than gold that perishes. So long as we do not abandon our faith under pressure, we will be able to echo the words of Job in his period of testing and apparent disaster, when he said in Job 23:10 NIV *But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold*".

Let me close with a division we'll call two kinds of tests. The parable of the sower in Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23 and Luke 8:4-8 describes the response of four different kinds of people to the message of God. You have heard this parable taught many times. The seed that fell by the roadside represents people who never receive the message into their hearts. It spread around them just

like the Word is preached today and never makes any impact. The seed that fell on good ground represents the people who heard the message and received it bringing forth fruit by faith that was enduring. Jesus described two other groups, represented by the seed that fell on the rocky land and that fell among the thorns. Folks in both of these groups received the message but later failed to produce good fruit. What kind of tests is represented by each of these two groups? One group never received the word, and the other is the one that fell on good ground. In between is the rocky ground and the thorny ground.

I want to talk about these as being two kinds of tests. The first one in Matthew 13:20-21 NIV *Hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.* The exact words of Jesus are significant. He does not say if affliction or persecution arise, but when.

Look at that in your Bible. Turn there and underscore it. Verse 21 says *Yet he has no root in himself. It is only temporary. And when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, he immediately falls away.* Jesus did not say if it comes but when it comes. In other words, affliction and persecution are promised to everyone who receives God's word. The question for each of us is not whether we will face these things, in order to build character, but when we encounter it what will we do?

Then there was the one about the thorns in Matthew 13:22 NIV Jesus says about this type of person that the *Seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.* The test that purges people here is not affliction or persecution at all. On the contrary, it's just the opposite. It is worldly cares and riches. If Satan does not get to you and cause you to stumble by causing suffering in your life, he will attempt another route. One of his schemes is loading us up with things. Many have fallen into that snare that passed the first test. The pressures of popularity, materialism and success choke out the truth so that in the end it has no effect in this life. Instead of being transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ, our world wallows in unbelief rejecting Jesus Christ.

For emphasis I repeat, these two groups represent the two types of tests to which believers are subjected. The first is when things are hard; the second is when things are easy. Some people give way under the pressure of persecution. They just cannot stand up under the test. So they reject Christ, worship Caesar, die and go to hell. Others succumb to materialistic success, dialectical materialism. In the book of Proverbs there is a sentence that applies to each of these two. Proverbs 24:10 NIV reveals, *If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!* Proverbs 1:32 NIV describes the sad category, *the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.* Tragically enough, Solomon himself fell into the latter category. In spite of the God given wisdom, prosperity ruined and destroyed him. God said to Solomon, a wise young man with unusual potential in life, if it were not for what he had promised his father, David, he would take the kingdom from him immediately. God's word has the answers and the better we know it, the more we see the mind of God.

Hebrews 11:24-25 NIV summarizes it vividly. *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.* For the next forty years Moses underwent the affliction test. He was in exile from his people, a non-entity in the world, taking care of sheep in the desert of Paran for his father-in-law Jethro in a barren way off place. On one hand, God allowed him to be tested in the wilderness with great difficulty and deprivation and persecution. On the other hand, Moses was presented the opportunity to hold the treasures of Egypt in his hand. When Moses had finally passed both these tests at the age of eighty, he emerges as God's appointed deliverer. Do you see how Moses underwent both of them? Excluding Jesus Christ, he was one of the three greatest men to ever live in my judgment! David is the second. I will allow you to name the third one. What a striking example of the words of the brother of Jesus Christ when in James 1:4 NIV he said, *Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

Put your ear to the Word and hear its pulse as it entreats you and me to go forth in faith. God will *snatch sinners from the fire and hide a multitude of sins*. On the other hand, listen to the terrorized heartbeat of a sinner as he is running madly into eternity. In order that I might implant this indelibly on your mind in the language of scripture, go to the very edge of hell and hear the damned warn their brothers not to come to this place.

Let's pray. "Holy Father: The whole secret lies in fighting on, fighting the good fight of faith, to be found when the battle is over shaken, wounded, downcast, humbled, but on Christ's side which is triumph. The victory of faith does not surrender to unbelief, does not quit! Do not give in to unbelief! Do not quit the fight; this is conquest! Do not give up! Do not be separated from God who is our privilege of service. When it is hard and the last battle is set will we be standing with God? When it is the day of death and we go to our graves, may our children take the torch of faith that we stake by our tomb and move it further in a dark world. When that day comes, may we not be faithless. In that hour, may it be that we are looking the foe right in the eye. In Jesus' name."

There is a difference in being a warrior and being a spectator. It is the difference in being in the battle, scarred, wounded and shaken, but you have been in the battle. You know how to wear the armor and go on with him. Jesus expects our faith to free itself from many external and material supports to find its own inner strength. He expects faith to free itself from fear and even death. *I will fear no evil though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, I hear a good man say. It is a mark of maturity when God alone becomes the source of deepest joy and the object of highest affection. Then you are growing in faith and your faith is developing a perspective that is life changing!

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity
Option 6 – When Disappointments Come
Deuteronomy 31:1ff; II Corinthians 4:17

INTRODUCTION

1. To strip away all mystery from life would be undesirable, even if it were possible.
2. The being of God must soar up into infinitude, far beyond the power of human thought and comprehension.
3. It is better to say with the Psalmist in 97:1-2 *the Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice...*
4. We are often made to ask, “Why do disappointments come?” As Moses was denied the privilege of entering Canaan, so disappointments come to each of us. They come in different forms and in varying degrees, but each of us must encounter difficulties in order that life may be properly balanced.

DISCUSSION

- I. Moses Was A Man Of Tremendous Courage, Outstanding Nobility And Purpose.
 - A. God called Moses to lead the children from Egypt through the treacherous wilderness into Canaan.
 - B. He had endured patiently with the Israelites opposition, treachery and ingratitude.
 - C. Moses and the Israelites were on the border of the land of Canaan. His difficult task was almost completed. Then came the great disappointment of his life when God said, *Thou shall see the land before thee, but shall not go thither in the land which I give to the children of Israel.* His hopes were shattered.
 - D. This disappointment is doubtless extraordinary. Yet they come to each of us, affecting all areas of life.
 - E. There are times when these experiences seem to heap one on the other. We find life somewhat different than we had always hoped. We must face the reality.

- II. The Nature Of Disappointments.
 - A. They usually come suddenly making them more difficult to bear. If only there had been a warning.
 - B. A good life is being enjoyed when suddenly disappointment breaks in and life changes.

- III. How Does One Regard Disappointments?
 - A. Miss Haversham, one of the characters in Dickens' Great Expectations, shows the seriousness of an inappropriate attitude. She completely withdrew from life and thus her frustration became the end of her world.
 - 1. Clearly that kind of reaction to disappointment is defeating.
 - 2. Yet there are some who react in the same way, even children of God.
 - B. There is one fundamental principle that must be grasped in order to look upon these matters in a better way.
 - 1. This is God's world and he is here.
 - 2. Omnipotence feels no strain because of the sin of this world.
 - C. God allows disappointment to come, but he never allows anything to frustrate his purpose of love for us.
 - 1. Therefore, in some way, our disappointments may be his appointments for us.
 - 2. Understanding may be as the song says, "Not now but in the coming years, it may be in a better land, we'll know the meaning of our tears. Someday we'll understand."
 - 3. Our experience does not mean that God has forsaken or ceased to love us, but he is owning us.

- IV. Why Do Disappointments Have To Come?
 - A. There are no signposts on a straight road.
 - B. Rebuffs sent by God can prevent us from making a more serious mistake.
 - C. William Penn said of disappointments, "To repine at them does not mend the matter, it is only to grumble at our Creator. To see the hand of God in them, with a humble submission to his will, is the way to turn our water into wine and engage the greatest love and mercy to our side."

1. Blind chance is not the explanation in the life of the Christian.
 2. Rather, ask God, "What are you trying to tell me and where are you leading me?"
 3. G. H. Jowett said, "We live by disappointment as well as by attainment. The cloudless sky makes a Sahara. We cannot live by success alone."
- D. The illustration of a woman who suddenly lost her husband and said "I must not forget that there lies the will of God. God's will is the very perfection of all reason."

V. The Fruit Of Disappointment.

- A. Disappointments have been the turning point in the lives of people.
1. At age forty-eight Victor Hugo in banishment did his greatest work. We are made to ask, "Was his disappointment his appointment?"
 2. It was in great disappointment that David learned a great truth.
- B. The apostle Paul stated, *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*
1. He had an inward self-sufficiency.
 2. It was not Paul's circumstances that were his source of satisfaction, but rather that wherever he was, there the will of God was being done through him. Disappointment did not pull him down. His point of contentment was not disillusioned by his disappointments. He lived beyond the range of it depressing him. And thus, with a beaten body or a cold prison cell the will of God was being done through him.
- C. We are told that after our disappointment, *God has comforted us not to make us comfortable, but to make us comforters of others.*

CONCLUSION

1. We have the grand assurance in Scripture that all things work together for the good of those who love the Lord. The “all things” include disappointments.
2. Our life must be lost in a cause that is greater than we are. In losing our life, we are finding the true meaning of life and thus in disappointment we will not be lost in delusion because our trust is in the one who leads us on a plane that surpasses this existence.
3. The path that many times is rough here is that which leads to the great pinnacle, to the crowning of the faithful in Heaven.
4. Our disappointments are steppingstones from our earthly cross to our Heavenly crown.
5. In Matthew 11:28 Jesus beckons, *Come Unto Me* (those with sin and disappointments), *and I will give you rest.*

NOTES
Module 7 – The Adventure of Adversity

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 8 – Faith in Elijah’s God
James 5:16-18

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus entered human history as a Savior. When he returns, he will be our Judge.
2. Discuss Malachi 4:5-6 and Matthew 17:10-12.
3. Discuss Matthew 17:2-11 and Mark 9:2-9.
4. It does not matter who we are. What matters is that God is with us.

DISCUSSION

- I. Awareness of Weakness in Christ Keeps One Strong Enough to Persevere.
 - A. Deity in humanity - God in a jar (earthen vessel).
 1. . . . *apart from me you can do nothing*, John 15:5.
 2. *All have sinned . . .*, Romans 3:23.
 - B. In human weakness, God is strong, I Corinthians 12:10.
- II. The Pronouncement
 - A. I Kings 17:1 NIV *Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, ‘As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.’*
 - B. The reality of the curse referred to by Jesus in Luke 4:25-26.
 - C. James sets a high standard for Christians. He restates the ordeal of Elijah, James 5:17-18.
- III. The Battle of Champions
 - A. I Kings 18:17 NIV *When he saw Elijah, he said to him, ‘Is that you, you troubler of Israel?’*
 - B. I Kings 18:21 NIV *Elijah went before the people and said, ‘How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.’*

IV. The Prayer of Faith.

- A. I Kings 18:41 NIV *And Elijah said to Ahab, 'Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.'*
- B. Seven tests of prayer.

CONCLUSION

1. Elijah, a man of like passions as we are.
2. George Muller often spoke of trust and faith in Elijah's God. His only son died an infant. His name was Elijah.
3. Youthfulness never frustrates God; immaturity does.
4. One may outgrow immaturity as he grows in faith toward God.
5. Elijah had three important tasks to do for God after he overcame his fear of Jezebel.
6. In the presence of dreaded realities of the unknown future, the soul's cry for spiritual help is instinctive and universal.
7. It is like the unconscious cry of the newborn baby for the food provided by God in the mother-life. It is like the unspoken cry of parched lips in the delirium of fever for cool water which the wandering intellect cannot give words for which to ask. Their human needs require super human help and super-human help is divinely provided, therefore, their souls cry out for such assistance. The God given supply prompts the man-felt longing.
8. He who refuses to pray, sins against the light of revelation and of nature. He wrongs his own soul as surely as if he were to refuse to smile in the hour of joy or to shed a tear when in sorrow.
9. "He who goes to bed and does not pray makes two nights of every day." Author unknown.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 8 - Faith in Elijah's God
Option 1 – Elijah A Man of Like Passion

INTRODUCTION

1. The people whom God was able to use as effective tools in scripture were men and women of prayer.
2. We may never understand the total theology of prayer.
3. In the affairs of this earth, overseen by a sovereign God, prayer creates the atmosphere in which the grace and mercy of God accomplishes the divine will, which otherwise would not be done.
4. Neither prayer nor faith is the ultimate value standing alone. It is only when they become tools, "a coupling link," between human need and divine omnipotence that history and eternity are at a turning point.
5. The classic illustrations of all scripture must include Elijah.

DISCUSSION

- I. *Elias (Elijah) was a man....*, James 5:17a.
 - A. The reality of his mortality.
 1. History wraps heroes of faith in garments of heroics, that often obscure the flesh and blood man.
 2. "Garments of fire" tend to separate the person from his calling until we scarcely think of them as human.
 3. This is especially true regarding the startling, fiery, rugged prophet called Elijah.
 - B. He came from east of Jordan, poorest of the poor.
 1. He was the sinewy-armed, scraggly-looking challenger of King Ahab.
 2. One must see the ill-kept person who was a prophet. Yet with all his idiosyncrasies, he was a man.
 - C. *A man of like passions as we . . .*, James 5:17b.
 1. He was austere, frugal, somewhat ascetic.
 2. James says he came from the same mold as all men.
 3. He was susceptible to days of faith, courage and hope followed by days of fear and sorrow.

- D. Elias was a man homeopathic (homoiopathes).
 - 1. After his great success against 850 prophets of Baal, soon we see him under a juniper tree asking God to kill him.
 - 2. Even though he threatened the moral depravity of his time, he fell subject to some of the very emotions he hated.

- II. *He prayed earnestly that it would not rain ...*, James 5:17b.
 - A. Despite all the rugged individualism of his ascetic life, he was a man of prayer of rare dimensions.
 - 1. In the “cause and effects” of Israel’s apostasies, there were many highs and lows.
 - 2. In time of prosperity, God blessed his people and they would soon forget him. Then came consequences/ punishment.
 - 3. In their cry for deliverance, God often answered in different ways.
 - B. Behind one deadly ancient drought was a praying man.
 - 1. This presupposes the efficacy of prayer and faith.
 - 2. This is not the first time prayer resulted in calamitous activities.
 - a. Moses’ prayer/staff opened a path for three million to escape Pharaoh. (Traditional number.)
 - b. Joshua and Hur held up the hands of Moses, and the sun stood still.
 - c. Men’s prayers are rare who impact God’s laws of nature.
 - C. The prayer of a mortal inflicted God’s judgment on a nation’s idolatry.
 - 1. Some might say, “Look at the physical pain, sorrow, and death his answered prayer brought on the land.”
 - 2. Women, children, animals, and plants died.
 - D. Elijah loved Jehovah’s plan for Israel so much he brought severe physical pain to awaken them to their spiritual drought.
 - E. Discuss the philosophy of drought as opposed to other punishments. It may have had to do with what people thought Baal could do. Therefore, this miracle had its preclusion from Jehovah.

- III. *Again he prayed, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its crops, James 5:18.*
- A. Could anything be more important to demonstrate the glory and power of God than the altar consumed by fire near Carmel?
- B. *And Elijah said to Ahab, ‘Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of heavy rain.’ So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. ‘Go and look toward the sea,’ he told his servant. And he went up and looked. ‘There is nothing there,’ he said. Seven times Elijah said, ‘Go back.’ The seventh time the servant reported, ‘A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.’ So Elijah said, ‘Go and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’ Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel. The power of the LORD came upon Elijah and tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel, I Kings 18:41-46.*
- C. Jehovah and his prophet move to another level.
1. The first prayer now becomes the basis for his second prayer.
 2. The altar episode in I Kings 18:18-40 is an important interlude which sets the stage for the continuation of a powerful prayer which now had lasted three and one-half years, Luke 4:25b. (The prayer of Jesus of John 17 is now going on two thousand years in length.)
 3. If God would answer the first prayer of Elijah to inflict the drought, surely he could be counted on to answer this part of Elijah’s prayer now that the purpose had been achieved. “If God answers prayer to inflict judgment, and he does, how much more will he hear it (prayer) to send blessing.” Awake My Heart, J. Sidlow Baxter, pg. 190.
- D. The posture and the prayer, I Kings 18:42-45.
1. Seldom has such faith ever been demonstrated. *There is a sound of a heavy rain.*
 2. This prior public champion who called down fire from heaven to “lick up stone, meat, water” and brave enough to rid the earth of 850 prophets, bad as

vermin, is now postured on the ground as a female slave in labor, in travail of birth.

3. A baby in the womb must be born. Elijah's faith in God lived in a future downpour, but it had to be born. The sky was clear, and the dust was as powder.
4. *Go and look toward the sea*, he told his servant boy over and over. *There is nothing*. The seventh time the boy reported, *Sir a cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea.....*
5. *Go, tell Ahab . . . the sky grew black, the wind rose, and a heavy rain came*. But Elijah saw and heard the rain while the sky was blue. His faith allowed him to see the unseen. His faith was the key that opened the door to the realm of the unseen where God had a mighty storm prepared to be released on the dry clods of Palestine.

CONCLUSION

1. It is a long way from I Kings 17:1 to James 5:17-18.
2. The power of the lesson must not be wasted on us. It was not wasted on George Muller of Bristol (1805-1898). He often thought, prayed, wrote, and preached about "faith in Elijah's God, who answers the prayer of faith still."
3. I see that fiery public champion of the Jehovah religion, the humble intercessor, on his face in the dust before God, pleading alone, as did Jesus, "with strong crying and tears" for his faithless brothers, Hebrews 5:7.
4. That kind of faith and prayer was not born on the days these events occurred. "There were countless days in a rocky cavern, a dry place where it was hot and dusty, often hungry and thirsty, this son of the hilly solitudes had poured out his soul unto his God." op. cit., J. S. Baxter.
5. James, the brother of Jesus, moved by the Holy Spirit of God, assured you and me that *the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective*, James 5:16.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 8 - Faith in Elijah's God
Option 2 – The Mantle of Elijah

II Kings 2 contains one of the most spectacular passages in all of the Old Testament. This chapter tells the miraculous story of the aging prophet Elijah and his servant, Elisha. When we pick up the tale, God has informed Elijah that his ministry on earth is over. Now he is to cross the Jordan River and go to a certain place, where a heavenly chariot will pick him up and translate him to glory.

As the old prophet pondered his last day on earth, he decided to visit the towns of Bethel and Jericho. He invited his servant, Elisha, to go along with him, and the pair set off on a “teaching journey.” After visiting both towns, they arrived at the bank of the Jordan River. *Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, ‘Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?’ ‘Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,’ Elisha replied,* II Kings 2:8-9 NIV.

At first glance, Elijah appeared surprised by Elisha's response. In verse 10 he said, *‘You have asked a difficult thing,’ Elijah said, ‘yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours-- otherwise not.’* As they walked along, suddenly a chariot appeared out of heaven and separated the men. In a flash, Elijah was taken up in the chariot and Elisha witnessed the whole scene. Verse 12 he cried out, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and tore them apart.* Elijah was gone. His mantle had dropped to the ground. Elisha ripped off his own clothes, tore them into pieces, and placed Elijah's mantle on his back. Then he returned to the Jordan and did just as his master had done. He took off the mantle and struck the water with it. Immediately the waters parted and Elisha walked over on dry ground. Thus began the young prophet's own remarkable ministry. The events in this chapter are absolutely incredible.

Yet what does this passage say to us today? I believe God has given us an unmistakable lesson here, with a clear, simple meaning and that is God wants to do greater things with each generation. And yet, each generation must seek the Lord for its own experiences of the Holy Spirit and its own power from him.

It is wonderful to read about God opening the Red Sea for Moses and parting the Jordan for Joshua. But it's another thing for us to ask God to perform wonders for us. Yet that is exactly what our Lord desires for us. He wants to perform miracles and provide more of his Spirit for his people beyond anything seen in the past. He longs to increase and enlarge our faith. Like Elisha, we ask for a double portion of his Spirit for his glory.

In this Old Testament scene, Elijah is a type of Christ ascending to the Father. And Jesus promises us in John 14:12 *You're going to do greater works than even I have done, because I go to my father.* He's saying, in essence, "You're going to need more of my anointing, power, and authority than any past generation has had. And my Spirit is going to endue you with all you need to overcome."

My first question in rereading this story was, "Why did Elijah take Elisha on this whirlwind trip?" Why did the older prophet want his servant to accompany him to Bethel and Jericho? Surely, it wasn't just a sentimental journey for Elijah, one last trip down memory lane. No. This wise, old man had some teaching to do. He wanted to coach Elisha, as well as put us on notice today that we need more of God's power and anointing.

The two men first came to Bethel, which name means "house of God." Indeed, Bethel had a great spiritual heritage. Jacob himself had offered his sacrifice there. Yet over the years, something had happened to the city. Jeroboam had set up a golden calf there, and soon the people were given over to idolatry. As a result, an entire generation had been lost to skepticism, scoffing, and mockery, robbing their children of any trace of Bethel's spiritual roots. Things were so bad, these people probably mocked Elijah and Elisha as the two arrived. We know this because just a day or so later, when Elisha came back to Bethel, the young men of the town ran out to mock him.

Now, as they walked through the streets, Elijah probably noticed his servant's horror and indignation at the totally backslidden society. Elijah himself had faced mockers and scoffers in his own day on Mount Carmel. But he knew it would take even greater supernatural strength to face this new generation. These young people were far more hardened and godless than the idolatrous priests he had battled.

It was probably at this point that Elijah decided to test his servant. He most likely suggested, "Elisha, why don't you settle here and pastor these people? You have a sure calling, and you've been well trained. You could help restore Bethel's great heritage." I'm sure Elisha listened, because he knew his master had powerful discernment. Yet I believe the young man quickly recalled the story of another prophet. God had sent an unnamed spokesman to Bethel to prophesy against Jeroboam's idolatry. This prophet had cried, "Jeroboam, your golden calf is coming down." And immediately the idol fell from the altar, spilling ashes. When Jeroboam saw this, he reached out to strike the prophet, but suddenly his hand was paralyzed. God affirmed the unnamed prophet's ministry with other supernatural works. Yet this same holy prophet was later seduced and compromised by a lack of spiritual power, I Kings 13.

As Elisha surveyed the situation in Bethel, he knew he wasn't ready to stand up against the wicked spirits there. He realized what Elijah had known all along--the need for the Holy Spirit to do a greater, more powerful work in him before he could face down the evil in such a wicked city. In II Kings 2:6 he told his master, *As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.* Then, Scripture says, *the two went on.*

I believe Bethel represents the kind of evil society our own nation has become in just a generation's time. We, too, live among scoffers and mockers--sensual people given over to lust, idolatry, and homosexuality. And this present generation is worse than any Elijah or Elisha ever faced. Holy prophets saw children mocking, scoffing, and blaspheming. Too many of America's children are murdering one another. Ten-year-old boys are raping five-year-old girls. Young children are killing without any guilt or sorrow, cutting down parents, classmates, and innocent strangers.

I do not wish to make a broad, sweeping judgment against all youth. I know there are many godly teenagers in our society who are on fire for Jesus. I thank God for every one of them who takes a stand for Christ in these times. Yet this evil day demands that God's people obtain a double portion of his power and authority, to be able to reach this lost generation. It requires a measure of anointing which we have never seen in all of history. It demands that a holy remnant rise up like Elisha and cry, "Oh, Lord more is needed."

We know this trip is not for Elisha's sake alone but to instruct every succeeding generation. Elijah and Elisha proceeded to Jericho, which means "a place called pleasant." Yet this city was now barren, dry and utterly lifeless. There were no trees, no pastures, and no fruit. Everything had withered because a stream of poison had infiltrated Jericho's water supply. This city represents dead, dry Christianity, a church Jesus describes in Revelation 3:1 NIV *you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.*

Elijah had established a school of prophets in Jericho, and apparently he and Elisha visited the school. Some of the young, upstart prophets approached Elisha in II Kings 2:5 asking*Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?* Elisha cut them off, saying, "Be silent."

These strong young men of God were students of the scriptures. They even had some prophetic vision, because they knew Elijah was going to be taken up that day. This was the generation of clerics, who would be sent out across Judah and Israel to minister to society, building schools, feeding the poor, and preaching the word.

But something was clearly missing in them, the power, anointing, and authority of the Holy Spirit. The next day these same ministers would be begging Elisha to let them go look for Elijah's body, in case the Holy Spirit dropped him off some mountain or into some valley. They were totally ignorant of the ways and workings of the Holy Spirit. They could witness, preach, and speak of miracles. But they hadn't experienced God's power for themselves.

Elijah probably overheard their conversation with Elisha. And he must have wondered if his servant discerned where this fleshly ministry was headed. So once again, the old prophet tested his young protégé. It appears he suggested, “Elisha, you’re looking at the next generation of ministry. Yet you can obviously see the lack of the Spirit’s work in them. Why don’t you settle here and teach these ministers the ways of the Spirit?”

But Elisha knew what would happen if he taught these ministers. They would remain enamored of Elijah’s power ministry and would constantly barrage him with questions about it. “How many hours a day did your master pray? How much time did he spend in the Books of the Law?” And these young ministers would spend all their energies trying to be little Elijahs, hoping to recreate his miracles, yet without the power and authority of the Holy Spirit.

The church today has fallen into the same snare. We study past movements and revivals, looking for keys, trying to discover methods to bring down fire from heaven. Since I can remember, the church has been crying for an old-fashioned, Holy Ghost revival. Yet this all stems from a desire to see God recreate something he did in the past.

Elisha answered his mentor in verses 2, 4, and 6, *I will not tarry here. I will not leave you.* He knew he couldn’t impact anyone in this dead, dry church until he received his own touch from God. He couldn’t rely on Elijah’s great works. And he wasn’t going to settle for anything less than more of the Spirit than his mentor had. He was telling Elijah, “I respect the faith of my forefathers, the spiritual giants of the past. But I know the Lord wants to do a new thing. And I have to have a greater touch from him than anything seen before.”

Going back now to the scene at the Jordan River, why did Elijah insist on miraculously passing through? The Jordan wasn’t a deep, wide river, and we have no evidence that it was swollen. There were fifty strong, young prophets on the other side who could have built a raft for them quickly. It seems that Elijah wanted to teach his successor that the sensational crossings of the past--from Moses to Joshua to the present day--were all

ancient history. He challenged Elisha, as if to say, “When you start your own ministry and you preach that God is a God of miracles, you have to testify to what he has done for you personally. I’m going to be gone soon and tomorrow, when you return to this river, I want you to go back across the way you came. Believe God for the miracles in your own life.”

Most of us don’t have faith to believe God for our own miracles today. We spend our time poring over the incredible wonders in scripture. Yet all along God wants to tell us, “I have something even better for you. I want to do miracles in your life--to change your home, fix your marriage and save your unsaved loved ones. You’re going to face your own Red Sea, your own Jordan River, and I want to part those waters for you.”

Over the Jordan, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask of me what I shall do for you before I go. The old prophet didn’t offer this as if a genie that would pop out of a lamp and grant three wishes. He offered it as a godly mentor. It was one last test, and he wanted to see how his young charge would respond. What would you have answered if asked that question? Probably many would have answered that society is warped, and things are getting more chaotic all the time. I’m tired of the battle, weary of the devil’s harassment. It is now dangerous just to be alive. Elijah, take me with you. I want to go home. Surely there’s room for two in that chariot! Indeed, our cry as God’s people should be, “Come, Lord Jesus.” Yet Jesus also tells us, *Occupy till I come*. As he was ascending to heaven, angels said, *Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*

Elisha knew his place wasn’t with the Lord at that time. He knew that God still wept over the rebellious children of Bethel and the barren church in Jericho. And he knew what was needed. He had to remain and take on the responsibility of facing an evil society and a dead religious system. I suspect he said to Elijah, “You’ve shown me the condition of society and the church. And you know I’m going to need more power, anointing, and authority than anyone before me has ever had. So I’m asking, *Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit*”, II Kings 2:9 NIV.

When Elijah heard this, he answered in verse 10, *You have asked a difficult thing.....* Yet who exactly would this task be hard for? Would it be hard for God? Would it be hard for Elijah, a man who had raised the dead and called down fire from heaven? It was going to be hard for Elisha. This was something he would have to obtain for himself. Elijah didn't have the ability to empower his servant with a portion of the Spirit residing within himself. Only God can impart his Spirit to man.

Elijah answered in verse 10*yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours--otherwise not.* It is important to note that the words "when" and "am" in this verse do not appear in the original Hebrew. They were inserted later into the text of the King James. Thus I believe Elijah is saying to Elisha, "If you see me as I am being taken from you....".

Elijah was saying, "The Holy Spirit can't do a special work in you as long as you're still leaning on my memory. You have to consider me gone. You don't need me, Elisha. Turn to the Lord whose Spirit also worked in me. He will answer your cry."

The moment he saw his master whisked away in the heavenly chariot, Elisha assumed his responsibility to carry on God's work to his generation. And as he stood at the Jordan and struck the water, the words he cried out were, "Where is the God of Elijah?" The young prophet was saying, "Lord, all of my spiritual forefathers are dead and gone. And this awful hour requires even more than you have given so far. Work again, Lord--this time through me. I have to be empowered with more of your Spirit."

Elisha went back to the same two cities retracing his steps with Elijah. Now after receiving a touch from God, Elisha went forward with his own faith. And his first stop was Jericho. The college of fifty prophets immediately recognized God's touch on him, saying, "The same spirit that was on Elijah is now on Elisha." It was obvious to all that this hidden servant was moving in a deeper power and authority of the Spirit.

The young prophets told Elisha in II King 2:19-22 *The men of the city said to Elisha, 'Look, our lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive.*

'Bring me a new bowl,' he said, 'and put salt in it.' So they brought it to him. Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, *'This is what the LORD says: I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.'* And the water has remained wholesome to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken. They had said, "There's poison in the water, and it's killing everything." Yet apparently these fifty men of God were powerless to stop the poison from bringing death to Jericho.

According to Isaiah 5:7 this "pleasant place" represents the ministry. *The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant....* Water here represents the word of God. Do you see the picture? The poisoned waters of Jericho signify the polluted word being preached from the town's pulpits. These men of God had never dealt with their own sins, so their sermons were full of poison from corrupted hearts. And their lifeless, flesh-oriented sermons were causing spiritual death among the people.

Show me a preacher in the pulpit who no longer believes God's word is infallible, who has rejected the virgin birth, who is involved in a secret sin, who no longer weeps over the sin he sees in God's people and I'll show you a church that's dying.

What was the cure for the poison in Jericho? It was to purify the water supply. And that's just what Elisha did. He took a clean vessel, filled it full of salt, and poured it into the fountainhead of the city's water. Soon all the waters were cleansed, and life sprang up all around. The salt Elisha used represents the gospel of purity and holiness. And the clean vessel he used represents ministers who have been cleansed by Christ's blood and sanctified by the Spirit's purifying fire, prepared to preach a pure gospel. Only these things can stem the evil tide in God's house--clean, pure vessels who walk in holiness.

Elisha went back to Bethel, a corrupted society with a lost generation of youth. And as soon as he arrived, he was mocked. II Kings 2:23-24 says *From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some youths came out of the town and jeered at him. 'Go on up, you baldhead!' they said. 'Go on up,*

you baldhead!’ He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the LORD. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths.

What a bad scene! Are you thinking “How cruel that God would allow little children to be attacked by bears.” But the words “little children” are a poor translation. In the original Hebrew, the phrase reads “young men.” (Spurrell, Hebrew) Did Elisha cause their deaths in a selfish fit of anger for being taunted? No! This godly man was moving under the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. The fact is those mocking young men had committed an unspeakable sin.

Undoubtedly, the boys had heard about Elijah’s translation into heaven. Yet now by taunting Elisha with the cry, “Go up, baldy,” they were ridiculing the work of the Spirit. They heard the truth about the Spirit’s holy work, but did not accept it. Their actions toward Elisha were an act of mockery against the ministry of the Holy Spirit, an unpardonable sin.

David Wilkerson
Times Square Church
Pulpit Series

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 8 - Faith in Elijah's God
Option 3 – Example of a Private Devotion
I Chronicles 29:10-18

One of the ways we show our love for God is the desire to spend time alone with him.

I. Focus.

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: 'In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it',
Isaiah 30:15 NIV.

Center on the presence of God. This is a decision you make, regardless of feelings. Begin now to open yourself to God. Pray something like this: "Here I am Lord. I'm here to meet you. I acknowledge your presence. I'm going to spend this time with you. Help me to realize that I am in your presence, that you are with me, even though I may not feel your presence. Amen."

II. Adoration.

After centering upon God, our praise becomes adoration. To adore God is to worship and praise him in our hearts and minds and with our lips. We worship God because of who he is. We praise him because of what he has done, is doing and will do. Read aloud the following Psalm 95:1-7 NIV *Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanks-giving and extol him with music and song. For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.*

III. Confession.

Next we move to confession as we examine ourselves and clarify our vision of who we are before God. *But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear,* Isaiah 59:2 NIV. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness,* I John 1:9 NIV. Begin at a personal level. What do you need to confess? It may help to write your confession. We are also involved in corporate sin. Confess now the sins of your church, community and nation. *'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips'...*, Isaiah 6:5 NIV.

IV. Thanksgiving.

After confession comes thanksgiving, the overflow of a grateful life. This should always be a part of our praying. Paul reminds us, *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus,* I Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV. Prayerfully recall at least three specific things for which you are thankful, and speak those aloud.

V. Supplication.

Adoration, confession, and thanksgiving help prepare us for supplication. Scripture calls us to supplication/ intercession. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God,* Philippians 4:6 NIV. Supplication is an intense word. It is intercession and petition combined, a kind of brooding, longing act of remembrance.

One at a time, name particular persons for whom you wish to pray. Hold each of these in your mind in the presence of God for three or four minutes, asking God to meet their needs.

Next, visualize your church. Focus on two of its most crucial needs. How can you help meet these needs? Verbalize aloud your intense longing for yourself and your church. Now, hold our nation and the world up to God.

Imagine that you are able to take our nation and world, as though it were a ball tenderly in your hands. Do that physically and in a symbolic way, lift it to God. Take your time now as you ponder and pray one at a time for each of the following:

- ✓ the hunger of the poor
- ✓ the desperation of those without jobs
- ✓ the anguish of a war-torn people
- ✓ the frustration of governmental leaders
- ✓ the futility of the wealthy whose lives have no meaning
- ✓ the despair of prisoners
- ✓ the helplessness of the elderly
- ✓ the fear of the terminally ill
- ✓ the confusion of the young

Lift all your feelings in an act of surrender to God. If you sense the desperation of persons and feel the anguish of your own inadequacy as you cry out to God, you have experienced supplication.

Claim the promise of God. *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land,*
II Chronicles 7:14 NIV.

Write what this scripture tells you to do.

VI. Commitment.

As a final act in this time of prayer commit to God the new person you have just become.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 8 – Faith In Elijah’s God
Option 4 – Enter Into His Courts With Praise

INTRODUCTION

1. Romans 8:1-2 NIV *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*
2. Matthew 21:16 NIV *‘Do you hear what these children are saying?’ they asked him. ‘Yes,’ replied Jesus, ‘have you never read, ‘From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise’?*
3. These two verses equate praise with strength.
4. God ordained praise. It stops Satan.

DISCUSSION

- I. Usher in the Presence of God.
 - A. Hebrews 13:15 NIV *Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name.*
 1. Praise of God is ordained.
 2. Let us offer continually a sacrifice of praise.
 3. Praise is a sacrifice by which the Christian accesses God.
 - B. Psalm 9:1-4 NIV *I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High. My enemies turn back; they stumble and perish before you. For you have upheld my right and my cause; you have sat on your throne, judging righteously.*
 1. When my enemies are turned back . . .
 2. Praise turns back the enemy by upsetting the climate that fuels the growth of life’s suffering, confusion, turmoil and strife.

- II. Draw Near in His Presence.
 - A. Abraham drew near God, Genesis 18:23 AV.
 - 1. Worshipers become like the God they serve, Deuteronomy 4:14ff.
 - 2. Praise is intended to compliment God.
 - B. Praise is an instrument of power.
 - 1. Praise beats out hell's brush fires.
 - 2. Praise breathes heaven's life into pain and death, which sin produces on earth.

- III. God Resides in the Praise of His People.
 - A. Psalm 22:3 NIV *Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel.* KJV *O thou that inhabits the praise of Israel.*
 - 1. *Yashab* means to sit down, to dwell or remain, to be enthroned.
 - 2. Jehovah God is enthroned in the praise of his people.
 - B. Praise is vital because it reverses the prevailing rulership in an earthly situation.
 - 1. Since the praise of God's people is where God dwells, this establishes his rule in Satan's territory.
 - 2. Praise makes a place for God's rule and thereby begins to overrule the lies Satan is working around us.
 - C. The word of God and prayer open the doors for God's power to work. Praise keeps them open.

CONCLUSION

- 1. We are priests under God, Revelation 5:10.
- 2. As we offer the sacrifice of praise, this brings God to the scene personally.
- 3. Abraham is the father of us all. He grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God, Romans 4:2.
- 4. Let us rise up in praise of our God.

NOTES
Module 8 – Faith in Elijah’s God

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 9 – Faith to Intercede

INTRODUCTION

1. Genesis 18:23-33; Philippians 1:3; 9-11.
2. *Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die, Genesis 20:7.*
3. *But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written, Exodus 32:32.*
4. *So he said he would destroy them had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them, Psalm 106:23.*
5. *So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me, Acts 27:25.*

DISCUSSION

- I. The Righteous Run to The Strong Tower And Are Safe.
 - A. Proverbs 18:10 affirms that God is our safe place in times of need and crisis.
 1. Many do not know about the Strong Tower much less who or where it is.
 2. We must run there for them:
 - a. family, children, husband, wife, mother father
 - b. friends, fellow Christians
 - c. colleagues, pastors pray passionately for their people
 - d. enemies, Matthew 5:44
 3. It is a privilege to petition the Lord on behalf of others.
 - B. Show them the way to the Strong Tower.
 1. God will point the way through us.
 2. Intercessory prayer takes us there and we are safe.
 - C. Some view intercessory prayer to be the ultimate call of God to his children.
 1. In everything God calls us to do, this may be our most important task and privilege.
 2. Greatest harvests for God are the result of quiet prayers on behalf of others.

II. Practicing Philippians 2:4.

A. *Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

1. This is intercessory prayer.
2. The word intercede (*entugxano*) means:
 - a. to fall in with, to converse, to address
 - b. intercede, plead one's cause. Harper Greek Lexicon, pg. 142
3. In intercession, we pray for one another.

B. Biblical examples of intercession.

1. Isaac prayed twenty years for Rebekah to conceive, Genesis 25:21.
2. Samuel said to Israel *As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right,* I Samuel 12:23.
3. David prayed for a sick child.
4. Jeroboam prayed for a sick son.

C. The greatest intercessors, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus. *My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,* John 17:20. *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them,* Hebrews 7:25.
2. Holy Spirit. *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will,* Romans 8:26-27.

III. Non-Biblical Intercessors.

- A. George Washington prayed for his troops at Valley Forge.
- B. John Knox (1505-1572) said "O Lord give me Scotland or I die."
- C. John Hyde (1865-1912) "Give me souls or I die."
- D. George Muller (1805-1898) prayed sixty-four years for provisions for ten thousand orphans who were in his care. Missionaries, Bibles and tracts were all the result of his prayers of faith.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 9 – Faith to Intercede
Option 1 – Who Is An Intercessor

We are deeply indebted to Norman Grubb for the book Rees Howells Intercessor. He captures the essence of the Holy Spirit as intercessor in the lives of God's especially called men and women -- the call to intercession, the ultimate call of God to mankind.

That God seeks intercessors but seldom finds them is plain from the pain of His exclamation through Isaiah: *He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor*; and His protest of disappointment through Ezekiel: *I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land...but I found none*.

Perhaps believers in general have regarded intercession as the same form of intensified prayer. It is, so long as there is great emphasis on the word "intensified"; for there are three things to be seen in an intercessor which are not necessarily found in ordinary prayer: identification, agony and authority.

The identification of the intercessor with the ones for whom he intercedes is perfectly seen in the Savior. Of him it was said that he poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many and **made intercession** for the transgressors. As the Divine Intercessor, interceding for a lost world, he drained the cup of our lost condition to its last drop. He *tasted death for every man*. To do that, in the fullest possible sense, he sat where we sit. By taking our nature upon himself, by learning obedience through the things which he suffered, by being tempted in all points like as we are, by becoming poor for our sakes, and finally by being made sin for us, He gained the position in which, with the fullest authority as the Captain of our salvation made perfect through sufferings, and the fullest understanding of all we go through, he can ever live to make intercession for us, and by effective pleadings with the Father *is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him*. Identification is thus the first law of the intercessor. He pleads

effectively because he gives his life for those he pleads for; he is their genuine representative; he has submerged his self-interest in their needs and sufferings, and as far as possible has literally taken their place.

There is another Intercessor, and in him we see the agony of this ministry; for he, the Holy Spirit, *makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*. This One, the only present intercessor on earth, has no hearts upon which He can lay his burdens, and no bodies through which he can suffer and work except the hearts and bodies of those who are his dwelling place. Through them he does his intercessory work on earth, and they become intercessors by reason of the Intercessor within them. It is real life to which he calls them, the very kind of life, in lesser measure, which the Savior himself lived on earth.

Before he can lead a chosen vessel into such a life of intercession, he first has to deal with all that is natural: Love of money, personal ambition, natural affection for parents and loved ones, appetites of the body, love of life itself. Whatever makes even a converted man live for himself, for his own comfort, for his own advantage, for his own advancement, even for his circle of friends, has to go to the cross. It is no theoretical death but a real crucifixion with Christ, such as only the Holy Spirit himself can make actual in the experience of his servant. Both as a crisis and process, Paul's testimony must be made ours: *I have been and still am crucified with Christ*. Self must be released to become the agent of the Holy Spirit.

As crucifixion proceeds, intercession begins. By inner burdens, by calls to outward obedience, the Spirit begins to live His own life of love and sacrifice for a lost world through his cleansed channel. We see it in Rees Howells' life. We see it at its greatest height in the Scriptures. Watch Moses, the young intercessor, leaving the palace by free choice to identify himself with his slave brethren. See him accompanying them through the waste and howling wilderness. See him reach the very summit of intercession when the wrath of God was upon them for their idolatry and their destruction was imminent. It is not his body he now offers for them as intercessor but his immortal soul: *If Thou will forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book*. He actually called this “making an atonement” for them.

The Apostle Paul was the greatest man of the new dispensation as Moses was of the old. For years his body, through the Holy Spirit, was a living sacrifice that the Gentiles might have the gospel; finally, his immortal soul is offered on the altar. The very one who was just rejoicing with the Romans that nothing could separate him from the love of God, Romans 8, a moment later said the Spirit bearing him witness, that he could wish himself *accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh*, Romans 9.

This is the intercessor in action. When the Holy Spirit lives His life in a chosen vessel there is no limit to the extremes to which He will take him in His passion to warn and save the lost. Isaiah, that aristocrat, has to go naked and bare-footed for three years as a warning to Israel. Hosea had to marry a harlot, to show his people that the heavenly Husband was willing to take back His adulterous bride. Jeremiah was not allowed to marry, as a warning to Israel against the terrors and tragedies of captivity. Ezekiel was not allowed to shed one tear for the death of his wife, “the desire of his eyes.” And so the list might be continued. Every greatly used instrument of God has been, in his measure, an intercessor: Wesley for backsliding England; Booth for the down-and-outs; Hudson Taylor for China; C.T. Studd for the unevangelized world.

But intercession is more than the Spirit sharing His groanings with us and living His life of sacrifice for the world through us. It is the Spirit gaining His ends of abundant grace. If the intercessor knows identification and agony, he also knows authority. *It is the law of the corn of wheat and the harvest: If it dies, it brings forth much fruit.*

Intercession is not substitution for sin. There has only been one substitute for a world of sinners, Jesus the Son of God. But true intercession so identifies the intercessor with the sufferer that it gives him a prevailing place with God. He moves God. He even causes Him to change His mind. He gains his objective, or rather the Spirit gains it through him. Thus Moses, by intercession, became the savior of Israel and prevented their destruction.

Mr. Howells would often speak of “the gained position of intercession” and the truth of it is obvious on many occasions in his life. It is a fact of experience. The price is paid, the obedience is fulfilled, the inner wrestlings and groanings take their full course then

“the word of the Lord comes.” The weak channel is clothed with authority by the Spirit and can speak the word of deliverance. Greater works are done. Not only this, but a new position in grace is gained and maintained, even then that grace can only be appropriated and applied in each instance under the guidance of the Spirit.

Mr. Howells spoke of it, in Mr. Muller’s phrases, as entering “the grace of faith,” in contrast to receiving “the gifts of faith.” What he meant was that, when we pray in a normal way, we may hope that God of His goodness will give us the things. If He does, we rejoice; it is His gift to us; but we have no power or authority to say that we can always get that same answer at any time. Such are the gifts of faith. But when an intercessor has gained the place of intercession in a certain realm, then he has entered into “the grace of faith”; along that special line the measureless sea of God’s grace is open to him. That is the gained place of intercession.

Mr. Howells referred to George Muller’s experience. Mr. Muller had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, but on one occasion God raised up a sick person for whom he had prayed. On another occasion he prayed for another sick person, but there was no healing. Mr. Muller, however, said that his was not a failure in prayer because he had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, and therefore the answer to the first prayer was merely “a gift of faith,” which would not necessarily be repeated. On the other hand, he had gained a place of intercession for the orphans. He was always ready to be the first sufferer on their behalf; if there was enough food for all except one, he would be the one to go without; and in this realm of supply God held him responsible to see that the needs were always met, for the doors of God’s Treasury had been permanently opened to him, and he could take as much as he needed. Grubb, Norman, Rees Howells Intercessor, CLC Publications, Fort Washington, PA 19034, 2001, pgs. 81-85.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 9 – Faith to Intercede
Option 2 – Contrasts of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. Profound encouragement by studying the lives of faith of God's greatest servants.
2. These prayers of faith are not merely windows into life but windows into eternity.

DISCUSSION

- I. Biblical Comparisons of Faith.
 - A. Abraham, Genesis 18:10 NIV *Then the LORD said, 'I will surely return to you about this time next year and Sarah your wife will have a son.'*
 1. Romans 4:17 NIV *As it is written: 'I have made you a father of many nations.'*
 2. Romans 4:17 NIV *He is our father in the sight of God in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.*
 - B. Thomas, John 20:24-29.
 1. Ten apostles had seen the resurrected Jesus.
 2. Thomas contradicted what they said because he had seen a dead body placed into a tomb.
 3. He was not able to process the truth of the resurrection beyond his five senses. He said "I will not believe until I see."
 - C. There is a difference between the spirit (heart) and the mind (soul).
 1. There are some circumstances in which *the spirit may pray but the mind is unfruitful*, I Corinthians 14:14b.
 2. One may pray with his spirit (heart) or one may pray with his mind (soul), I Corinthians 14:15a.
 3. One may sing with his spirit (heart) or he may sing with his mind (soul), I Corinthians 14:15b.

- II. Universal Test for Genuine Faith.
 - A. Have God's word on a matter or principle.
 - B. Believe what God says.
 - C. Do not allow the apparent contradictory circumstance to throw you off track or dispute the fact.
 - D. Give glory to God. Abraham did. Thomas did not.
 - E. *Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and **gave glory to God**, being fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he had promised. This is why it was credited to him as righteousness, Romans 4:20-22.*

CONCLUSION

1. These Bible characters are like actors on a stage. They have made their exit.
2. You are now on stage. What impact will you make on history?
3. Alter history by YOUR prayers of faith.
4. Abraham's faith is an example of a God-kind of faith.
5. Thomas' faith is an example of a man-kind of faith.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 9 – Faith to Intercede
Option 3 – The Grace of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. This title was used by Rees Howell regarding George Muller's standing with God in regard to ten thousand orphans who were cared for by faith in the nineteenth century England.
2. Abraham is a classic biblical model of intercession. God called him a prophet, Genesis 20:7, and my friend, Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23.
3. Moses enjoyed unusual favor with God. *With no other have I spoken as with Moses.*

DISCUSSION

- I. Abraham.
 - A. The call, Genesis 12:1-3.
 1. His unselfish heart toward Lot, Genesis 13:8.
 2. He rescued Lot, met Melchizedek and received a blessing from God.
 3. God's covenant with Abram. This is one of the most important events in the Old Testament. He was placed in right standing with God because of his faith, Genesis 15.
 4. Ishmael and the seal of his standing with God was completed with the rite of circumcision, Genesis 16-17; 23-24; Romans 4:11.
 - B. Three angels (men) visit Abraham.
 1. Two of them go on to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 18.
 2. The principle one, called LORD in verse 10, confirms to Abraham that about one year later he would return *and your wife, Sarah, will have a son.*
 3. Romans 3 and 4.
 - C. Abraham's bold prayer of intercession.
 1. The vulnerability of God, 18:17-21.
 2. Abraham remained standing before the Lord, verse 22.

3. The prayer
 - a. for wicked Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - b. the audacity of challenging God to do right, verse 25.
 - c. his humility – dust and ashes, verse 27.
 - d. his tenacity, from 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, 10...
4. How far will God go? It is as if he came down off his throne to commune with Abraham.
5. God stirs the heart of man to pray for others.

II. Moses.

- A. The call, Exodus 3:4.
 1. Preparation in Pharaoh 's house.
 2. The solitary years in Midian and the Negev.
 3. The excuses – Who am I?
 4. To Moses being a nobody in Midian and doing right was better than being a tyrant ruling Egypt.
- B. The commission:
 1. *I am sending you...*, verse 10.
 2. *I am the one who always is...*, verse 14.
- C. The courage of encounter, "Go", verse 16.
 1. Signs for Moses, Exodus 4.
 2. Egyptian retaliation.
 3. The plagues, Genesis 7-11.
 4. The Passover and deliverance, chapters 12-15.
 5. The journey to Sinai, chapters 16-19.
 6. The Ten Commandments, chapter 20.
- D. Forty days of awe.
 1. Moses in the mountain with God.
 2. God said, *Go down....your people have become corrupt*, chapter 32.
- E. One of the greatest prayers in the Bible.
 1. The setting: Moses descends the mountain and hears a noise – worship? Joshua joins him and hearing the same sounds calls it war.
 2. The condemnations, chapters 19-29.
 3. The pronouncement, *You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sins*, chapter 30.

F. The prayer.

1. Climbing Sinai again, Moses had a heavier burden than any other man except Jesus.
2. At the foot of that mountain were people of Abraham's descent, covenant people. They sinned grievously against God. Moses had come to know God in his forty days and knew that God could not excuse their sins. They must be forgiven or condemned. He knew a sacrifice was required. He was willing to be the sacrifice. *So Moses went back to the LORD and said, 'Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written,' Exodus 32:31-32 NIV.*
3. **In our language, Moses said, Lord forgive your people and if not, send me to hell with them.**

G. The Intercessor.

At the end of the forty days and forty nights, the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. Then the LORD told me, 'Go down from here at once, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have become corrupt. They have turned away quickly from what I commanded them and have made a cast idol for themselves.' And the LORD said to me, 'I have seen this people, and they are a stiff-necked people indeed! Let me alone, so that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make you into a nation stronger and more numerous than they.' So I turned and went down from the mountain while it was ablaze with fire. And the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands. When I looked, I saw that you had sinned against the LORD your God; you had made for yourselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. You had turned aside quickly from the way that the LORD had commanded you. So I took the two tablets and threw them out of my hands, breaking them to pieces before your eyes. Then once again I fell prostrate before the LORD for forty days and forty nights; I ate no bread and drank no water, because of all the sin you had committed, doing what was evil in the Lord's sight and so provoking him to anger. I

feared the anger and wrath of the LORD, for he was angry enough with you to destroy you. But again the LORD listened to me. And the LORD was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, but at that time I prayed for Aaron too.

III. The Call For Intercessors.

- A. The twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel describes a time of great moral breakdown in the nation of Israel.
1. The priests had violated God's law and lost the distinction between the holy and the profane.
 2. The leaders had become corrupt and abused their power, shedding innocent blood, oppressing the people and destroying lives for the sake of dishonest gain.
 3. The prophets were smearing whitewash, speaking lies and falsely representing themselves as spokesmen for God.
 4. It was a time when God's people lost their heart for him, defiled themselves by idolatry and sexual immorality and oppressed and wronged others.
- B. During this time, the Lord declared, ***I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none*** (no intercessor). *So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD, Ezekiel 22:30-31.*
1. Just think of the difference one faithful, holy, prayerful person could have made!
 2. Now think of the difference one faithful, holy prayerful person (Moses) did make.
 3. Do you sense that conditions are just as dire, if not more so today? Immorality, violence, greed, corruption, abuse of power, false teaching, ungodly leadership, oppression, dishonest gain and so forth, are rampant.
 4. Various forms of judgment are already underway and greater judgment looms.

CONCLUSION

1. *So he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them, Psalm 106:23 NIV.*
2. If the intercession of one holy man of God kept the wrath of God from destroying an entire nation, what may a praying church do on behalf of their city?

NOTES
Module 9 – Faith To Intercede

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 10 – The End (Goal) of Faith
The Bedrock of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. *Receiving the goal (objective) of your faith, even the salvation of your souls*, I Peter 1:9.
2. The author of Hebrews revealed in chapter 10 that salvation is established on the bedrock of Christ's sacrifice and not through the Levitical practice.
3. The death of Christ opened a *new and living way* and as a result all believers have direct access to God.
4. *Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith...*, Hebrews 10:22.
5. Our forefathers lost all and in the midst of great persecution did not shrink back. They believed and are saved, verses 32-39.

DISCUSSION

- I. The Essence of Faith.
 - A. The distinctives of faith.
 1. The author's first statement was definitive – *now faith is...*, Hebrews 11:1a.
 2. He was not referring to the faith exercised at time of salvation, John 1:12; Romans 12:3b.
 - B. *Now faith is the substance...*, Hebrews 11:1.
 1. "Now" looks back to 10:38 which served as the introduction to the subject of chapter 11. *My righteous one will live by faith.*
 2. Faith is here described by the Holy Spirit with two words:
 - a. substance
 - b. guidance
 3. *Hupostasis* literally means to stand under referring to something supporting a foundation, like solid rock standing under a foundation.
 4. In this context, Jesus Christ is the solid ground on whom one builds the foundation of faith.

- C. The word substance (*hupostasis*) also includes the idea of assurance.
1. The Greek term referred to signed documents establishing ownership of property. It was a title deed as assurance or proof of ownership.
 2. Faith functions as the title deed from God that gives existence, assurance, confidence to the “hoped for things”, from the time of salvation through all eternity.
 3. Faith in Jesus Christ is God’s guarantee that assures the believer that God will do what he says he will do, Romans 4:21.
- D. The word evidence (*elegexos*).
1. To put to proof, to test, to convict.
 2. To refute, to detect, lay bare, expose.
 3. “To chastise, to discipline, experience conviction”. Harper’s Greek Lexicon, pg. 131.
 4. Inwardly convinced of a thing, something already finished, certainty although not seen, not visible to the eye.
- E. The present as future.
1. God’s work has not been finished because of time.
 2. Faith gives his work present reality.
- F. To name a few:
1. Total benefits of salvation
 2. The high priestly ministry of Jesus
 3. Access to God in prayer
 4. Enjoying Divine answers to prayer
 5. Spiritual growth and maturity
 6. The on-going ministry of angels
- G. The words substance and evidence are not independent from each other. However, when combined, describe biblical faith in the life of a believer. Authentic faith is the assurance in the heart and the absolute conviction that God’s promises are true. What is to happen is as sure as what has already happened or is occurring now. **Faith projects the present to the future.** Hope brings part of the future into the present to sustain us.

II. Elders of Faith.

- A. Verse 2 of chapter 11 provides a summary statement of men who, in the past exhibited great faith in God. As a result *they obtained a good testimony*.
 - 1. The word for (*gar*) is used to connect what has been said about faith in verse 1. Examples of the nature of faith are recorded in chapter 11.
 - 2. It literally means in this, or by means of this, and refers to the sphere and exercise of faith.
- B. The word elders (*presbuteroi*) does not refer to old men or people in official ecclesiastical positions, BUT to the forefathers of the Jewish people mentioned in the Old Testament. These become the great cloud of witnesses of Hebrews 12:1.
- C. The meaning of “good testimony”:
 - 1. Some believe it means they received God’s approval and praise.
 - 2. Others believe the faith they experienced provided an inner witness in their hearts that God is and his promises are true.
 - 3. Some believe the faith of these forefathers became witness or encouragement to their generation and for generations to follow.
 - 4. The third may be the best - simply to be a testimony that their faith was genuine.

III. Evidence of Faith.

- A. The author begins with creation.
 - 1. This is the greatest example of faith - creation itself.
 - 2. This is the basis of believing in things that are invisible.
- B. The word “understand” means to perceive with our spiritual intelligence that God created “the heavens and the earth”, yet no one saw him do it.
We believe this was a great demonstration of God’s faith.
 - 1. “Worlds” means ages, eons; much more than the physical world.
 - 2. Ages include all time, space, things visible, invisible, past, present and what is eternal.

- C. God framed, outfitted, prepared this universe.
1. Unity, symmetry and beauty characterizes all he created.
 2. This was done by:
 - a. Word (*Logos*) Jesus, John 1:1; Hebrews 1:2-3
 - b. Word (*Rhema*) utterance, Hebrews 1:3
 - c. The universe was created (*bara*) from nothing that existed before (*ex nihilo*), out of nothing.

CONCLUSION

1. Had the visible world been created out of previously existing material, there would have been no room for faith.
2. There are only two positions one can take on creation:
 - accept the explanation from the revelation of God's word.
 - embrace the speculative theories of philosophy or science on how the material world began.
3. Whatever position a person chooses, he/she must accept it on the basis of faith. Portions from David Levy, Israel Gospel Ministry, pg. 36, Bellmawr, N.J.

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 10 - The End (Goal) of Faith
Option 1 – Unbelief/Un-faith

INTRODUCTION

1. My definition – “Faith is the capacity of the human heart which when activated by the word of God enables one to embrace (trust) God, whom he has not seen, to know that God is real.”
2. Intellectual faith
3. Articulated faith
4. Power of words
 - a. Tower of Babel, Genesis 11:1ff.
 - b. God said in so many words, “I must thwart or weaken the ability of man to generate sin.”

DISCUSSION

- I. The Challenge of Confession.
 - A. Galatians 3:19 NIV *The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.*
 1. Romans 15:4 NIV *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*
 2. Exodus 23:20-21 NIV *See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way . . . Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him*
 3. Numbers 14:27 When the people murmured and complained against God, they provoked the angel.
 - B Numbers 14:28 NIV *Jehovah said to Israel, I will do to you the very things I heard you say . . .*
 1. “We are going to die out here.”
 2. “I told you this would be a long, hard trip.”
 3. “We should have stayed in Egypt.”
 4. “We may get snake bitten in this wilderness.”
 - C. The tests and trials that came upon Israel were the result of their rejection of God.
 - D. Their confession or provocation showed their lack of faith in God.

II. Sin (Unbelief) Against God.

A. Old Testament background:

1. Plagues 1-4 designed to get Pharaoh's attention.
2. Plagues 5-10 designed to get Jews' attention.

B. Miracles of deliverance from Egypt:

1. Opening of Red Sea, Exodus 14:16.
2. Work of God at Marah, Exodus 15:23.
3. Work of God at Rephidim, Exodus 17:1.

C. "Bad report" from ten spies, Numbers 13:32; 14:1.

1. People showed their unbelief by murmuring and complaining.
 - a. "Let us go back to Egypt (slavery)."
 - b. "We will be snake bitten out here."
 - c. "Our families will be kidnapped."
 - d. "We will die out here."
2. God said, *I will give you what you say. So tell them, 'As surely as I live declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say,* Numbers 14:28 NIV.

D. *It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir Road,* Deuteronomy 1:2 NIV.

III. New Testament Teaching For Us.

A. New Testament warnings against unbelief (*apistos*), I Corinthians 10:1ff.

1. Idolatry, vs. 7a
2. Drunkenness, vs. 7b
3. Sexual immorality, vs. 8
4. Murmuring (testing the Lord), vs. 10
5. Complaining (grumbling), vs. 11
6. Do not fail to apply this to oneself, vs. 11

B. Take heed, Hebrews 3:17-19; 4:1-2.

C. Israel "tempted and proved" Jehovah God.

1. He preserved them, Exodus 23:22.
2. He provided water, Numbers 20:1.
3. He provided bread and meat, Numbers 11:7; 31.
4. Their words condemned them, Numbers 14:36-37.

D. What about you and me? II Corinthians 5:7.

1. Do I believe God when he says:
 - a. *I will meet all your needs,* Philippians 4:19.
 - b. *I will never leave you or forsake you,* I Kings 8:57.

- c. *Through his infirmities he heals our diseases,*
Isaiah 53:4
- d. *By his stripes, we are forgiven,* Isaiah 53:5.
2. *Do not provoke your angel,* Exodus 23:21.
3. *Listen to MY voice* says Jehovah and act in faith.

CONCLUSION

1. These people were not atheists.
2. They saw God at work for them. *Satan blinded their minds,*
II Corinthians 4:4.
3. Faith is Satan's greatest enemy.
4. *When the Son of Man comes back to earth, will he find faith?*
Luke 18:8.
5. *My just ones shall live by faith,* Habakkuk 2:4.
6. *We walk by faith and not by sight,* II Corinthians 5:7.
7. Do we really?

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 10 – The End (Goal) of Faith
Option 2 – Consequences of Unbelief
Deuteronomy 11:22-32; Numbers 16

INTRODUCTION

1. Early in school something caused you to break a rule or disrespect the teacher.
2. Throwing things when he/she was not looking.
3. Bunsen Burners hooked to water . . . trouble.
4. Throwing off yoke of authority.
5. As school starts each fall, how much better would school be if there were no teachers, no principals, no authority figures?
6. Get rid of the boss.

DISCUSSION

- I. Deep in the Human Heart is the Desire to Reject Authority.
 - A. Abuse authority.
 - B. The need to disobey God.
- II. Problems in Ancient Israel.
 - A. Moses, the George Washington of Israel.
 1. Plagues, Red Sea, etc.
 2. Israel had escaped Egypt, been fed in the wilderness, provided for in every way, rejected God.
 3. Twelve spies sent out. They turned from God.
 - B. Insidious evil emerges. Read Deuteronomy 11:5.
 1. Two men, Dathan and Abiram, ignored God's anointed leaders, a fatal mistake in any age, Numbers 16.
 2. Benedict Arnold, Alger Hiss, Bonnie and Clyde, Al Capone gang.
 - C. For ancient Israel, mention Dathan and Abiram and a great historic fact is remembered.
- III. Numbers 16:1-3.
 - A. Korah ..., son of Levi, Dathan and Abiram became insolent and rose up against Moses.
 1. A discontented group who organized around Korah. They were not content with the role God had given them.

2. They were envious and wanted someone else's job.
 3. "Moses, we think it is unfair that only certain ones of our cousins are able to serve in the tabernacle."
 4. "After all, we are all holy people."
 5. Dathan and Abiram formed/joined a movement that was resentful and prideful against God's chosen, appointed and anointed leaders. When that happened, they were not just disrespectful of God's men, but of God's Law.
- B. Moses and Aaron were the inspired messengers of God's inspired word for Israel.
1. Moses was especially inspired and was to the early Hebrew nation what the New Testament is to us.
 2. Jehovah had instructed that only the sons of the High Priest (Aaron) could perform certain tabernacle rites.
 3. Dathan and Abiram were treading on serious ground. Not just challenging a human leader but God himself.
- C. What happened?
1. Moses was very angry. Read Numbers 16:6.
 2. Each has a job to do and must be thankful for the opportunity to serve wherever it is.
 3. Those men stepped out of God's role for them, beyond the boundaries he set. That is dangerous!
- D. Moses set up a test. Read verses 12-14.
1. What are these men saying about Moses?
 2. Would you like that kind of attitude on a team, in the work place, in the church?

IV. Important Principles.

- A. Dathan and Abiram rejected God's ordained leader over them.
1. Question? Am I respectful and obedient to the word of God? That is the voice of Moses for us.
 2. Do we really hear the message of God? Do we obey it until it crosses or threatens us, until it tells me to do something I do not want to do, until it tells me to quit my pet sin. That is when the rebellion in all of us wants to show itself for it really is just that - rebellion.
- B. Dathan and Abiram wanted out of their designated role.
1. They wanted to do what others were designated to do and neglect their role of work.

2. Moses reminded them, "God gave you a very special service or place (verse 8), a place that is important and needed but not the place of High Priest."
 3. They coveted the ministry of another. This is true today.
 4. Each of us has a sphere of influence. Fill it! As an example, fathers, don't place on your wife the responsibility for decisions he intends for you to make.
 5. In our work, we are involved with troubled families. One of the greatest problems we see is family members who abdicate roles of responsibilities.
 6. Church roles: elders, deacons, ministers, teachers. They are humans like the rest of us. They are not on a "higher level" than anybody else. They are God ordained. Respect them!
- C. One loses all thankfulness.
1. Mad, sad folks do not praise God with a thankful heart.
 2. Being negative causes blurred vision. Satan mixes error with truth. Read Numbers 16:13-15. "Moses, you are a liar. You have not done what you said." Very negative.
 3. Elements in a church who grow unhappy and discontent, always griping and complaining are not doing much with what God has given them. Folks with their eyes on Jesus are too busy to murmur and complain.
- D. Our nation is the greatest on earth. Be on guard against the general attitudes of harmful thinking.
1. We are living in a time of discontent.
 2. There is complaining about nearly everything.
 3. Everyone is a genius in his own eyes, and everyone else is an idiot.
 4. Let us be careful what we are teaching our children if we live in the "objection mood" and the "kickative case."
 5. Our nation is rapidly moving toward anarchy. The spirit of slander and destroy has become a way of life for our culture. Christians should not go there.
 6. A negative attitude can develop in our earthly family and in our church family. Moses said, "Remember Dathan and Abiram."
 7. They influence others toward discontent.

- V. God's Solution. Read Numbers 16:16ff.
- A. Lines were drawn. The recent Olympic competition is a sandlot game compared to this stage.
1. Serious opposition, Moses and Aaron with priestly regalia.
 2. Other side, Dathan and Abiram and 250 followers.
- B. The glory of Jehovah settles down on this "church meeting" to end this dispute! God says *I will destroy the whole nation. I am tired of this rebellion and unbelief!* Moses prays for his enemies. God really did not intend to do this. Why? You say, "So we could learn." God used hyperbole. He uses this often to impact our hearts.
- C. Rebellion against God or his anointed leaders is as bad as witchcraft, I Samuel 15:23
1. It is like treason, not some subject for late night comedy routines.
 2. This is serious!
 3. Our culture has lost sight of this and Satan has won another battle!
- D. Moses says, *No, God! You will not treat the innocent as guilty.* Then, as now, only a few are guilty.
1. We are only going to deal with the guilty.
 2. Moses interceded as he always did, and God relented!
- E. "Moses, tell all the people to move back your tents from the rebellious ones!"
1. The people separated from the troublemakers, and we should, too!
 2. Suddenly an earthquake swallowed them, Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their followers.
- F. This was not a one-day affair and a knee-jerk reaction from God.
1. This started when they left Egypt.
 2. The murmuring and complaining was constant.
 3. Immediately after the praise service for deliverance from Egypt, the complainers set in.
- G. The justice of God.
1. *Moses and Aaron offered incense and made atonement for Israel after God destroyed the troublemakers. He stood between the living and the dead and the plagues stopped, Numbers 16:47b-48.*

VI. God's **Goodness and Severity**, Romans 11:22.

A. At the founding of the nation of Israel, the Lord God dealt a strong blow against insolence, rebellion and disrespect for his word, plan and goodness.

B. At the founding of the church, he did likewise, Acts 5 NIV regarding Ananias and Sapphira. God cut them off. James 4:11 says, *Brothers, do not slander one another.*

CONCLUSION

Read Jude

Faith Enrichment Seminar
Module 10 – The End (Goal) of Faith
Option 3 – The Just Shall Live By His Faith I
Habakkuk 2:4b

INTRODUCTION

1. Difference between faith and feeling.
2. Faith bridges the gap between time and eternity.
3. Unfaith or unbelief is the greatest sin.

DISCUSSION

- I. Attempt of Man to Approach God.
 - A. Education – Knowledge.
 - B. Morality – Character.
 - C. Good works – Performance.
 - D. Financial resources – Possession.

- II. No Alternative to Faith.
 - A. Hebrews 11:6 NIV *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*
 - B. Psalm 23:1 *The Lord is my Shepard, I shall not want.*

- III. The Word and Faith.
 - A. The most difficult part of prayer is not asking but believing.
 1. It is difficult to be fully convinced about something we cannot see or know empirically.
 2. That is why it is so important for us to recognize and understand what is really true, what we can actually believe.
 3. Until we know something is true, we can hope for it, but we cannot believe it, we cannot be certain. Faith is much more than “hoping hard.”
 - B. Every aspect of our lives should operate by an exercise of faith.
 1. We are saved by faith, Ephesians 2:8-9.
 2. We live by faith, Galatians 2:20.

3. We walk by faith, II Corinthians 5:7.
 4. We stand by faith, I Corinthians 16:13.
 5. We overcome obstacles by faith, Matthew 17:20.
 6. We fight by faith, I Timothy 6:12.
 7. We achieve victory by faith, I John 5:4.
- C. In fact, *Without faith it is impossible to please Him*, Hebrews 11:6.
1. The apostle Paul sums it up by saying, *Whatever is not from faith is sin*, Romans 14:23.
 2. But what is faith? What does it mean to believe?" *A Passion for Prayer*, Tom Elliff, Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois, pg. 47.

CONCLUSION

1. Faith is inherent in the nature of God.
2. God created man with the capacity for faith.
3. Illustration of Adam and Eve.

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Module 10 – The End (Goal) of Faith
Option 4 – The Just Shall Live by His Faith II

As we conclude this study, faith is the means by which Christians do business beyond time and space and bring to pass hopes that are otherwise not obtainable. This gives us an added appreciation of its power. The faith of a man or woman has the ability to bridge the depth between your humanity and eternity. It unleashes eternal powers that earth would otherwise never know about. When involved in this study of faith, the mind of a man or woman is a bridgehead for the eternal God in time and place. I admonish each one, be faithful! *Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful,* 1 Corinthians 4:2 KJV. What is a steward? It is one who is charged and made responsible for the business affairs and property of another.

Acts 4:32-35 is an example of how a community of believers functioned in faith in Jerusalem after the Holy Spirit was poured out on them. Luke records, *And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to himself was his own, but all things were common property to them.* A literal translation of this text includes these thoughts. *And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and abundant grace was upon them all. For there was not a needy person among them: for all who were owners of land and houses would sell them, and bring the proceeds of the sales, and lay them at the apostles feet: and they would be distributed to each as any had need.*

There are three statements here that go together and to me unlock a secret for success in a local church. First, the apostles were giving witness of the resurrection. You and I do that by preaching the pure, beautiful gospel. We have the written miracle. Second, abundant grace was upon them. As a result of the gospel being preached, God blessed them with abundant grace. Third, as a result of that grace, there was not a needy person among them. That is amazing, simple and yet profound. It has been before us for a long, long time. The verbal witness of the apostles

was enforced by the visible grace of God upon the believers. And third, the practical result was that all their needs were met. I maintain that in that way the whole body of God's people provided a single, consistent testimony to the complete sufficiency of God's grace through faith in their lives. Make a note of it: Verbal witness, visible grace, practical results. Our day needs similar demonstrations. It is to the degree that we apply this principle that the church is effective in the community.

This part of our study discusses some principles in determining the anatomy of faith. This section we call "no alternative to faith." The Bible is emphatic about our walk with God. On the positive side, as we have seen, God makes available abundant grace on the basis of faith. This we have established from the scriptures. On the negative side, God rejects any other basis on which we might seek to approach him. Nowhere is this more perfectly stated than in Hebrews 11:6 NIV which most know by memory, *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

People have often tried to approach God on some basis other than faith. This occurs because of pride. Some attempt to approach God on the basis of education, wealth, morality, or works. This is an effort to impress God with what one knows, how much money one has, how good one may be, or how many good deeds one has done. These virtues when used as an aid to faith are commendable. These same virtues when used as a substitute for faith are blasphemous.

Most have never taken a life, drank alcohol excessively, committed adultery, robbed a bank, etc. and we think quite highly of ourselves. We have the idea that there is a basis by which our goodness should cause God to at least owe us something. I am reminding you that is not how it works! God does uphold Christian morality. But morality alone is not enough. All of the good works that everyone does is not enough to offset one of my sins, much less cleanse this sinner. Good works is involved in it, but that is not all there is. This is an effort to approach God on the basis of what we do, when used as a substitute for faith.

As I travel throughout the country in my work, I am called on to help resolve problems. I have sat with preachers' wives and elders' wives as they wring their hands. It is obvious by looking in their face and heart there is a problem. They have said, "Bro. Lemmons, I just can't do enough; I can't be good enough." My response to that is, "I'm not good enough either; I can't do enough either. We must learn to rely on the Lord and trust his grace. What this does is make our religion one of joy rather than one of fear and compulsion. What I am sharing with you will cause you to enjoy your religion rather than living in fear. Sure I want to do more, to be busy every day in the vineyard of the Lord. But when we have done everything we can, we are yet unprofitable." This is not encouraging anyone to cease the good being done, but to encourage that it be done with the right perspective. Do what you do as an expression of joy-Jesus has saved you! One must serve God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind.

My grandfather lived to be ninety-seven years old. He and my grandmother reared a large family, many of whom are elders, preachers, teachers and missionaries today. When my grandmother died, they had already been married near seventy years. I saw him talk about dying like I would talk about getting into my car and driving to the store. I saw a man's physical life literally outlive his reason for existence. How appropriate the old song "This world is not my home!" I was blessed to be allowed to observe his last days. This world is not our home. It seems from our perspective right now that things will go on as they are forever. That is not to be! Don't be deceived by things that perish.

There are only two attitudes one may have toward God. One is faith, which unites us with him, the other is unbelief, which separates us from him. In Hebrews 10:38-39 NIV the writer quotes that famous prophecy from Habakkuk which confronts us with these two alternatives, *But my righteous one shall live by faith: and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.* Faith unites with God. It is the fuel that activates God. Disbelief is the fuel that activates Satan.

Finally, let me summarize by saying that faith is a part of the eternal nature of God. That is an awesome thought. That being true, God will disseminate that God-kind of faith to the recipient who links himself to God. God will accomplish some things that otherwise have never entered the heart of man. When a man expresses or articulates the word of God, he is expressing it in faith.

As part of his universe, as part of his image and likeness, man shares three aspects of his divine nature. First, is the ability to exercise faith. Thank God for that. That makes a man above everything else in creation, including angels now in the presence of God. Not always has that been the case but notice I said, "now." Man cannot lift like an elephant and he cannot run like a gazelle. He cannot climb like a cat, swim like a dolphin or fly like a hummingbird. He did not give you and me instincts like he gave the deer or the salmon. I maintain without the principle of faith exercised in and through the heart of man, he is not even a good animal. We waste God's natural resources. Different from the animals, God created man with the capacity to believe. *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh (the desire to indulge), the lust of the eyes (the desire to acquire), and the pride of life (the desire to impress), is not of the Father, but of the world,* I John 2:16.

Faith reverses the process of temptation that led to man's fall. Man's fall was the result of unbelief. Faith turns around the process, returning man, who left, back to God. This is why one cannot approach God without faith. Faith requires man to renounce confidence in his senses and a self-exalting desire of his ego to achieve independence from God. Only then will he affirm his final confidence in the invisible realm of God and his word. Thirdly, man's destiny is determined by his response to faith's requirement.

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Option 5 – It Is Only By Faith

After his weeping and crying out to the Lord, the Psalmist ended by saying, ...*with you there is forgiveness*, 130:4a. The Holy Spirit began to flood his soul with memories of God's mercies. Suddenly he recalled all he had learned from his Father's forgiving heart, his pondering nature. *You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love*, Nehemiah 9:17b.

In Psalm 86:5 David rejoiced, *You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you. Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits--who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion*, Psalm 103:1-4.

With these truths, David has stated one of the foundational promises of the New Covenant that God has made with us. Jeremiah said in 31:34 *I will forgive their iniquities and I will remember their sin no more*. Hebrews 8:12 assures us of the same truths.

We are justified by faith, Romans 5:1, which is beyond human reason. The gift of the blood-atonement of Jesus Christ is deep, gracious and mysterious. It is beyond our ability to understand. Sin may impose condemnation, fear and guilt over our trespasses. Our Heavenly Father stands lovingly beside us at all times, ready to forgive.

The love of the Father, the blood of Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit are known by faith. *The just shall live by his faith*, Galatians 3:11. *Therefore receiving the end (goal) of your faith, the salvation of your souls*, I Peter 1:9, is our assurance as we live here for a while and move into eternity forever.

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Option 6 – Praying in Faith

But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself, John 12:32-NIV.

Holy Father, *David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, ‘Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.’* Father, impress on my heart the faith of Jesus when he said, *If I be lifted up*, and he was neither referring to his resurrection or ascension, but to his cross. He saw it as God’s exaltation of him, for he realized that the cross gave him a higher glory than even the throne of heaven itself, apart from it, could ever give him.

Little did his enemies know or suspect or realize that in crucifying him, they actually were participating in glorifying him. The thorns became diadems, his wounds divine gems and his cross became a throne.

Oh, Father, you loved me and Jesus gave himself for me. With what wonder and worship I sing! Oh, what wondrous love I see, deeply shown by you for me. When he suffered all alone, oh, what love, matchless love. Oh, what love for me was shown. His forever I will be for the love he gave to me, in Gethsemane alone.

Interlude

Father, from the human side, there was a nailed victim dying in agony and weakness, helpless. His few friends were powerless to do anything but weep. The mockers taunted him. He cried, “I thirst.” His face was bruised, his brow scarred, the ugly wounds from the whip, the dripping blood from his crucifixion. Finally, his head jolted forward in death.

Pause

Ah, Holy Father, by your living Spirit, allow my soul to take a deeper look. Help me to see that beyond the dark cloud of his death was a bright sunlight. In any given moment Jesus could have summoned legions of angels and annihilated all his

murderers. One breath of his power by which he cast out demons, healed sick bodies, straightened the crooked limbs, and raised Lazarus from the dead could have swept down from that cross and obliterated every Satan inspired enemy.

Dear God, it was not nails but agape love which held him there. That, which men perceive as weakness in its most pitiful form is really love at its greatest. It is love which is stronger than death and which all the floods of hatred cannot drown. Through his dying, Jesus showed me his undying love, allowing Satan to render his mortal frame helpless, the same manner in which he demonstrated his omnipotence, *Father, forgive them.....*

Oh, God, help me to see the sublime paradox of Calvary, love's ultimate victory. Because in not doing anything to save himself, he did everything to save a sinner like me.

Outwardly, I see the deepest tragedy of human sin.

Inwardly, I see the highest triumph of divine grace.

Outwardly, I see hideous crime.

Inwardly, I see the sublime expression of the Son's obedience to the Father.

Outwardly, I see a miscarriage of justice.

Inwardly, I see all controlling, overruling, sovereignty of the divine purpose.

Outwardly, I see frustration--he was "cut off"

Inwardly, I see completion--"It is finished," eternal salvation.

When heaven bled on that cross, hell was defeated in its own strategy. Jesus knew all this all the time and called it his "lifting up." The cross showed how much he was hated and is the very means by which he is now most loved.

NOTES

Module 10 – The End (Goal) of Faith

LIVING FAITH
by Hubert A. White

I'VE DREAMED many dreams that never came true,
I've seen them vanish at dawn,
But I've realized enough of my dreams, thank God,
TO MAKE ME WANT TO DREAM ON.

I'VE PRAYED many prayers when no answer came
Though I waited patient and long,
But answers have come to enough of my prayers
TO MAKE ME KEEP PRAYING ON.

I'VE TRUSTED many a friend that failed,
And left me to weep alone,
But I've found enough of my friends true blue,
TO MAKE ME KEEP TRUSTING ON.

I'VE SOWN many seed that fell by the way
For the birds to feed upon,
But I've held enough golden sheaves in my hands
TO MAKE ME KEEP SOWING ON.

I'VE DRAINED the cup of disappointment and pain
And gone many days without song,
But I've sipped enough nectar from the roses of life
TO MAKE ME WANT TO LIVE ON.

FAITH – GOD’S TWELVE STEP PROGRAM

- 1. We understand God created all things good by Faith.**
- 2. We understand the mysteries of creation by Faith.**
- 3. We learn God’s Word by Faith.**
- 4. We are empowered in the Holy Spirit by Faith.**
- 5. We are forgiven by Faith**
- 6. We are declared righteous by Faith.**
- 7. We walk by Faith.**
- 8. We are healed by Faith.**
- 9. We overcome the world by Faith.**
- 10. We understand the things to come by Faith.**
- 11. We will be resurrected by Faith.**
- 12. We enter into God’s rest by Faith.**

By Dr. Albert G. Lemmons

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Dr. Albert G. Lemmons was born in 1936 in Northern Arkansas. He is from a lineage of gospel preachers that dates back more than 150 years to John M. Lemmons who was born in 1806 and was converted under the preaching of Ben Franklin and Barton W. Stone, pioneers of the Restoration movement of New Testament Christianity. No generation has since been without able preachers.

Lemmons was educated at Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee; Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas; Harding Graduate School, Memphis, Tennessee; University of Miami, Florida; Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas; and Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Florida, from which he received the Doctor of Ministry degree in May, 1974.

He has been married to Patsy Davenport Lemmons for fifty-six years. They have five children, eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Among the books he has authored are Prayer and Fasting, Teach Us to Pray, Christian Trustee, Dynamic Faith, and Is Fasting for Today? Dr. Lemmons has conducted more than 600 revival meetings, workshops, and seminars during his fifty+ years of ministry, including Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America.

The Lemmons live in Franklin, Tennessee, where he serves as Associate Minister for the one hundred eighty year old Fourth Avenue Church of Christ. He continues to conduct seminars, workshops, and lectures each year and mentors ministers/pastors on a national basis. In 2002, Lemmons was appointed as a National Senior Advisor on the Presidential Prayer Committee.

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Notes