

1. Developing Overcoming Faith

www.victory.net.nz 26.05.2024
www.youtube.com/c/VictoryChristianCentre

Sub-title: Developing Persistent & unwavering Faith

Today we are embarking on a new series of messages on the subject of faith. We will (re)learn and be reminded of:

- what faith is
- how to live by faith
- how faith works
- how to get faith
- how to release faith into every area of our lives

1 John 5:4–5 (NIV) For everyone born of God overcomes the world. **This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.** **5** Who is it that overcomes the world? **Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.**

- Only (born again) believers in Jesus Christ are able to overcome the world
- Our faith in Jesus Christ lifts us above the world, into a place of victory

1. Jesus Christ will be looking for Faith at His 2nd Coming

Luke 18:1–5 (ESV) *And he told them a parable to the effect that they **ought always to pray and not lose heart.** **2** He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. **3** And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ **4** For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, **5** yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’*

- Jesus taught His disciples about persistent prayer & unwavering faith
- In this parable, He used the example of a widow and an unjust judge
- The widow kept coming to the unjust judge to demand justice in her case
- Initially he refused, but eventually he ruled in her favour & gave her justice because of her persistence & her refusal to give up

Luke 18:6–8 (ESV) *And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. **7** And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? **8** I tell you, he will give justice to them*

speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?

- Jesus contrasts the bad attitude & delayed actions of the unjust judge with the excellence of God and His swift actions towards His elect people
- The unjust judge delayed his help, and then only gave it reluctantly
- But God, who is the righteous judge, responds to us speedily
- vs.7... will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night?
- ... Will he delay long over them?
- Vs. 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily
- Then, Jesus makes this profound statement:
 - *when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth*
- He is referring to the time when He returns to earth

Luke 18:8 (MSG) ... how much of *that kind of persistent faith* will the Son of Man find on the earth when he returns?

WuestNT. ... *will He find the aforementioned kind of faith on the earth [a faith which keeps on pleading in prayer such as that exemplified by the persistence of the widow with regard to the judge]*?

- Jesus will be looking for faith when He returns to earth
- Obviously, he won't be looking for some unseen force floating around in the atmosphere
- He will be looking for men, women & children who have faith in their hearts toward God. He will be looking for:
 - People who believe that God is a prayer-answering God
 - People who believe that God is a covenant-keeping God
 - People who believe that all of God's promises are YES & AMEN

2. What is Faith?

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV84) Now *faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

- faith is being sure of what we hope for ...
- faith is being certain of what we do not (yet) see

- When we read God's promises in the Bible, they produce hope of the very things that God has promised
- That hope isn't reality yet – its only a picture (a snapshot) of the future
- Our faith causes us to be sure (confident) of the things we hope for
- It causes us to be certain of what we do not yet see

Example:

- When a sick person reads the promises of God about divine healing, they become hopeful that God will heal their body
- It is faith that gives them the surety & certainty that healing belongs to them
- It is faith that lays hold of the power of God that brings healing to their body

- Therefore, faith is confidence toward God
- Specifically, faith is confidence that God is good & that His Word is true

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

- He who comes to God must believe that He is (that He exists)
- Therefore, faith is believing!
- We must believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him

3. Every Believer has the Measure of Faith

Romans 12:3 (ISV) *For by the grace given to me I ask every one of you not to think of yourself more highly than you should think, rather to think of yourself with sober judgment on **the measure of faith that God has assigned each of you.***

- God has assigned the measure of faith to every believer
- It is our responsibility to grow and develop our measure of faith

Example:

- Every baby is born with the same “measure” of muscles
- Each baby must develop its muscles to full functionality & capacity

4. All Things are Possible to him who Believes

Mark 9:17–20, 21-24 (NKJV) *Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. **18** And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.” **19** He answered him and said, “O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.” ... **21** So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. **22** And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But **if You can do anything**, have compassion on us and*

help us.” **23** Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” **24** Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “**Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!**”

- This father said to Jesus: If You can do anything, help us ...
- Jesus replied: If you believe, **all things are possible** to him who believes
- Many people know that God can do miraculous things
- But people who have faith believe that God will do miraculous things in their lives

5. Faith always has an End-Goal

1 Peter 1:3–9 (NKJV) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, **5** who are **kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** **6** In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** that the **genuineness of your faith**, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, **8** whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, **yet believing**, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, **9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.***

- Vs. 5 We are kept by the power of God through faith
- It is our faith that lays hold of the power of God in our lives
- Notice: ... faith for salvation
- Faith is always for something
 - Faith for salvation produces salvation
 - Faith for healing produces healing
 - Faith for prosperity produces prosperity
- Vs. 9 ... **receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls**
- Faith always has an end-goal
- Many of God’s promises do not come to pass automatically
- Faith always receives what God has promised