

How to Have Faith

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Introduction

Did you know that you have lots of faith? In fact, you have great faith. You are probably sitting on a chair as you read these words. You probably plopped yourself onto that chair without any thought that it would not collapse from your weight. Can you see the air you breathe? How do you know that it's there or how long it will last? You probably don't carry an oxygen bottle around just in case it's suddenly gone. See what great faith you have?

You may say, "I know the chair will hold me up and not collapse." No! You don't know that for sure, but you have FAITH that it will not collapse. You don't carry an oxygen bottle around with you because you have FAITH that there will be air to breathe, though you can't see it. Do you see how you have faith in certain things because of experience that leads you to trust that what you hope for will come true: air to breathe and the chair will not collapse?

As humans, we generally trust in what we know. That's how faith is and why we, as Christians, must study God's Word to learn and KNOW what He has promised to us as His followers. According to Romans 10:17, "*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*" In the Hebrew language of the Old Testament, the word that is translated, the "Word" of God is *rhema*, which means a spoken or a living word. It can be a personal revelation to you about a specific thing that you have been praying about. When you read it or hear it, it may not be an audible voice but, it will be very real, like a knowing deep down in your spirit. Faith comes when you suddenly gain an understanding that God is speaking, and it will produce the confidence to act on it.

God's will is revealed in His Word. It contains a general revelation of Himself and His will for all of us who live here on earth. It can also contain a specific revelation for you about something He wants you to know or do for Him. God NEVER contradicts His Word, the Bible, and uses it to confirm a personal word that He may speak to your heart.

Did you know God promised in the Bible that He will provide all we need in this life? II Peter 1:3 tells us, "*His divine power has given to us all things that lead to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us...*" God's divine power has given to us all things that we will need to live a life worth living here on earth as we serve Him.

What are "ALL things?" What does "all" mean? "All" means the whole or greatest possible number. Nothing is left out. It includes everything. God provides us everything we could possibly need in this life so that we can fulfill our destiny.

How then do we take possession of all these things that our Heavenly Father promises to us, His children? Mark 11:24 tells us that we must believe. Believe is another word that means to have

faith in or trust in. Jesus says, *“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”* Believing is having faith.

Everything we receive from God comes by faith. *“Without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for everyone who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”* (Mark 11:24)

You may be asking yourself, “What exactly is faith.” The dictionary defines faith as confidence or trust in a person or thing, like the chair you are sitting in, or belief that is not based on proof. The Biblical definition is found in Hebrews 11:1 – *“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.”*

This verse tells us that another word for faith is confidence. Confidence usually comes from either experience or belief that what someone you trust is telling the truth. Trust is usually built slowly over a period of time. Like most things, trust begins slowly and steadily grows and develops into faith. When my children were learning to walk, I would hold out my hands and tell them to come to me. I was only a step away, so I could catch them and keep them from falling. As they took those first few shaky steps, I never let them fall or hurt themselves, though they may have stopped and held onto something or sat down. I would stand them up again and encourage them to make another try. They learned to trust that I would not allow them to hurt themselves and that I was always near enough to catch them if they were in danger. That’s how God trains us to walk by faith. Start small and trust that He is close by to catch you if you are in danger. God is a good and loving father who will be there to help each of us succeed.

What Faith is Not

Faith is not hope. Faith is the means by which we receive the things we hope for. Another word we could substitute for hope is, “wish.” I hope/wish the money will come. I hope/wish I will be healed by God. Neither is faith *seeing* what you hope for. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith cannot exist in the visible realm. You do not need faith for the things you can see. You need faith for the things you cannot yet see but anticipate seeing in the future. Faith is the invisible “substance” that takes the place of the physical things you hope for until it is made visible.

This small booklet will help lay the foundation that will strengthen your faith regardless of your present level. It will encourage you to trust your Heavenly Father to a greater degree, so you can fulfill your destiny.

Chapter 1

Receiving God’s Promises by Faith

There are literally thousands of promises in God’s word that are available to every believer today. Someone counted them and found 7,648 specific promises in the Bible that are for us today. The promises of God for finances, healing, deliverance from fear, our daily problems and

the salvation for our loved ones are for us TODAY. When we get to Heaven, there will be no sickness or disease and everything we will need is already provided. If that is true, what are the promises of health, healing and provision of all our needs for? They are for us while we are still here on earth. There is not one verse about Jesus needing to heal anyone in Heaven. He only heals here on Earth because that's the only place where there is sickness and disease.

One verse that you must commit to memory is Hebrews 13:8, "*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, TODAY and forever.*" Another similar verse is found in Malachi 3:6, "*I am the Lord God, I do not change.*" If those verses from both the Old and New Testaments tell us that God does not change, then He is still healing and doing miracles today in our midst through the power of the Holy Spirit. In John, Chapter 14, Jesus told his disciples that He was going away and that it was better for them when He was gone. Can you imagine what must have been going on in their mind? Jesus, God Himself, had been with them providing their daily needs, doing healings, miracles and delivering people from demonic oppression. Now He was going away. But Jesus comforted them by saying that He was sending the Holy Spirit who would be their helper. The Holy Spirit *never* goes away. He is always with us, just as He was with the Apostles and early believers. He is like Jesus, the same yesterday, today and forever. He will be there to encourage and empower us so the Great Commission can be fulfilled. The Holy Spirit empowers us spiritually and provides for us physically and financially to fulfill God's will for planet Earth.

The Bible says in Numbers 23:19, "*God is not a man, so He does not lie. He is not human, so He does not change His mind. Has He ever spoken and failed to act? Has He ever promised and not carried it through?*"

You can depend on God to always be the same. He is always at work on our behalf to bring us to a place of maturity and to provide all that we need to fulfill His will. He loves us and promises to care for us and meet every need. In turn, it is our job to love Him and do what He asks us to do on His behalf.

You may be asking yourself, "How do we receive His promises?" All that God promises believers in His word can only be received by an act of faith. It does not depend on our age, whether we are a man or woman, tall or short, our level of education, or where we live. We receive absolutely everything from God by faith. In that way, we are all equal before Him.

The question then arises, "How do I get faith." Romans 10:17 says, "*So then, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*" The word hearing in the Greek language is "*rhema*" which refers to the spoken word rather than the written word. It is referring to the word that God speaks to your heart—a revelation. It all begins with the *written* word. As we read, meditate and study, it becomes the living word referred to in Hebrews 4:12 - "*For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" The Word of God is alive and can interact in your heart through the power of the Holy Spirit to speak to you. The Holy Spirit speaks to us daily but sometimes He speaks in a special way. I once had an experience when God spoke to me in such a powerful way that it still stands out in my mind, though it took place almost 25 years ago.

I was living in Japan and had just heard of a great revival going on in Toronto, Canada, through a visiting pastor from England. I was somewhat interested in this strange revival but it was taking place half way around the world. It was late on Sunday night and I had had a full day as pastor of the church. As we were putting the children to bed, my wife asked if I was going to Toronto. I told her that it was interesting but that if God wanted to do something special like that, he could do it without my traveling half way around the world. She asked, *“Well, don’t you think you should at least pray and ask?”* I thought, *“OK, I will make her happy and take a few minutes to open the Word of God and ask the Lord about going to Canada.”* I had lots to do and didn’t feel like taking a long trip. Besides, I didn’t have the money for such a trip. I took my Bible and sat in a comfortable chair. I then said to the Lord, *“If You want me to go to visit this revival meeting, please speak to me clearly from Your Word.”* I then opened my Bible and it fell open to Jeremiah 18:1-2, which says, *“This is the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, the prophet, saying, **“Arise and Go”*** The words almost jumped off the page toward me. I did not hear an audible voice but a “very real” voice which spoke to my heart. There was such a powerful “presence” of the Lord and revelation: I knew that I knew that I was supposed to go and I was to go *immediately*. I told the Lord that I needed confirmation by providing for the trip. In a more normal way of speaking to my heart, He reminded me that a check for \$1000 USD had come in the mail from a former church member who now lived in America. There was no note with the check designating the use of the money. The Lord spoke again and said, *“I have already provided for the trip through that check.”* I had a sense of urgency, so the next day I booked my ticket and left the day after that. When I arrived in Canada, I discovered that there was a big conference beginning the very next day that would answer all my questions about the revival. I also met people who would impact my life and ministry for years to come. God does not speak that powerfully all the time, but He does speak to us daily.

I once held a seminar at our church about the work of the Holy Spirit. I began by asking the people if they had ever had God speak to them, not necessarily in an audible voice but perhaps a quiet inner voice of the Spirit. About half raised their hands indicating that they had heard God speak. I then told those who had not raised their hands that I would show them that they heard the Holy Spirit speak all the time but just didn’t recognize Him. I told them that we would conduct an experiment in which they would ask the Holy Spirit to answer one simple question. I asked them to get quiet before the Lord, clear their mind (not empty it) and ask the Lord to speak only a one-word answer to them. The question was, *“Lord, please speak one word that describes how you see me?”* We all got quiet and asked Him to speak to each one. Then I asked them what they had heard. Everyone had heard something *“in the voice of their mind”* that had not been there before. Some heard words like beautiful, powerful, loving, brave, handsome, etc. They were surprised to learn that they had been hearing the Lord’s voice and just didn’t recognize that He had been speaking to them regularly. God speaks to us all the time and we should learn His voice and respond to Him when He speaks. Jesus says in John 10:27, *“My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.”*

Everyone’s faith grew when they realized that God really was close at hand and working with them, just as He had promised. This encouraged them to expand their obedience to the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit to believe Him for other things He would speak to them about. He is always there to give instructions, comfort and to encourage us in fulfilling God’s purpose for our lives and for us, as His servants, to be His hand extended to others. His promises are

received by faith and when we learn to recognize that small inner voice or the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit, we can exercise our faith (or trust) that we are hearing His voice and accomplish His will.

In John 10:11 Jesus said, “I am the Good Shepherd...” Are you one of His sheep? Do you know His voice? Listen carefully and learn the voice and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. **He will not tell you anything that is contrary to the written Word of God.** He will not tell you to do anything that Jesus wouldn’t do. The Holy Spirit is encouraging but He is also convicting. If you do, say or think wrong thoughts, that still small voice will let you know by speaking, or sometimes you get a bad feeling or perhaps experience a loss of inner peace when you have grieved (disappointed) Him.

Before my wife, Paula, and I got married, she didn’t like me. That was OK because I didn’t like her, either. She and I were opposites. We both had full-time jobs but did part-time evangelistic work on the same team twice a week. God eventually spoken to me that we would be married someday. I didn’t want to hear that, but I knew it was from God and He began to change my heart. She noticed a change in me toward her, although I had said nothing. She hardened her heart toward me and it affected her relationship with the Lord. She finally went to the Lord and asked what the problem was. He told her what she had feared in her heart, that she was to marry me. God changed both of our hearts and we got married about six months later. We lived happily serving the Lord together for more than 20 years, until she died and went to be with the Lord. We were complete opposites in some ways, but we supplied what the other lacked and fit together perfectly as a team.

Just as the Lord withdrew His conscious presence from Paula because she was resisting Him and His will for her, if you are resisting His will, He will back away, and you will lack faith to do what you normally do. Sometimes we don’t want to hear what the Lord has to say but remember, He gives good gifts and has a perfect plan for each of us. We can decide to do what we want to do and forget to ask the Lord if it is His will. If our relationship with God is not right, we will begin to experience a lack of His presence, peace and joy in our lives.

As a young Christian, the Lord gave me a verse for my life. It is Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path.”*

Once you acknowledge and learn that God is ALWAYS good, you can begin to trust Him in greater ways than ever before. The more you learn to trust and obey Him and His ways, the more He can trust you with greater gifts and responsibilities in His Kingdom. We receive by faith. Faith is trust. It is built slowly a little at a time and it may seem like giant steps in the beginning, but God will not ask you to do anything that He will not also empower you to accomplish. He may need to send you some help from time to time, but He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will always be there with you one step at a time. If you are not stretching yourself to believe God and to stretch your faith for greater things, you may need to ask why. Perhaps you have become tired or have hardened your heart because He has asked you to do something you did not want to do. Don’t be like Jonah but be obedient quickly.

One of my favorite verses is I John 5:14-15 – *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petition that we have asked of Him.”*

I would like to say one last thing before moving on. God will always give you confirmation. He says in Matthew 18:16 and in II Corinthians 13:1 that every word should be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses. This is a principle that we should always follow. It means that we should look for confirmation of what the Lord asks us to do, especially if it is new or something unusual.

Chapter 2

Faith for Finances

Not only does God promise to meet all our needs, He actually says that He will meet the desires of our heart as well (Psalm 37:4). In Philippians 4:19, Paul writes to the church in Philippi and says, *“And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* I have heard many Christians claim this verse, asking God to supply all their needs. However, Paul told the Philippians that God would meet all their needs because they had participated financially in supporting missionary efforts. If you are not supporting missionary work of some kind, that verse is not for you. However, there are other verses that proclaim that God will meet our needs. Many people get into trouble by pulling a verse out of context to use to petition God for a need. Take the time to make sure you base your request on verses that match your request. This takes time in the beginning, but it is well worth the effort to do as God proclaims, *“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth”* (II Timothy 2:15). I highly recommend that you memorize I John 5:14-15, *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”* Do you need CONFIDENCE (faith) that God will answer? Ask ACCORDING TO HIS WILL and you can KNOW that your answer is on the way.

God does promise to meet all our needs but there are requirements or conditions that we must meet in order to receive the abundance of financial blessings for which we often ask. Do not look only at one verse but look also at the context of the verse and see if there are requirements. If you are not receiving financial blessings, there is a reason.

I have served the Lord full-time for more than 40 years and can testify that My God has supplied all my needs according to His riches in glory. I have never missed a meal because of lack of food or money, my car has never run out of gasoline and all of my bills have always been paid... however, sometimes it was on the 45th of the month. By that I mean, they were occasionally paid late. However, He has ALWAYS supplied for me. Sometimes people have come to me with an offering and said something like, *“The Lord spoke to me a couple of weeks ago to give this to you, but I was busy and forgot. I hope you didn’t need it right away.”* God is faithful. Your supply may be late because people are not always faithful to obey in a timely manner.

In the early 1980's I worked at the US Center For World Missions in Pasadena, California. Part of my work was to travel across the US speaking in churches, Bible Schools and small group meetings to recruit and promote missionary work among unreached people around the world. We did not receive a salary and had to raise our own financial support. I would meet with pastors and church leaders to talk about their mission program. I did not get many opportunities to speak in churches in those days. We lived by faith and trusted God for our financial support. On one trip, we travelled all the way across America. I talked with lots of people but received almost no offerings to help with our expenses.

On the last morning of our time in a certain city, the couple we had been staying with arranged for us to meet with their pastor at a coffee shop. We had a good time sharing about missions and talked for a long time. Just as we were almost finished, the couple we had been staying with came into the coffee shop. Their schedule had changed and the husband had the day off. They decided to come meet with us one more time before we left. The pastor left shortly after the couple arrival but in a few minutes, the pastor returned and gave me a check and said, "The Lord spoke to me saying that you had a financial need." We never told people of our personal needs unless they asked. He left, but in a few minutes returned for the second time. He said, "May I see that check? I want to make sure I signed it." I had not looked at the check but gave it back to him. He smiled and said, "The Lord told me you were in real financial need and I wanted to make sure." As the pastor left, the wife of the couple began to cry. She said that the Lord had spoken to her that morning to give us some money, but she thought of several reasons why she could not afford to give an offering to the missionaries. She then opened her purse and promptly wrote a check and gave it to me.

The truth was that we did not have enough money to buy gasoline to get to the next town. This was a real test of our faith in God to supply halfway across the country. We trusted God to supply and He did. That's not the end of the story. We learned a few months later that when this lady returned home that morning, there was an envelope at her door with the same amount of money she had given to us. A neighbor had borrowed some money from her a while back and had forgotten to repay it until that very morning. God blessed that woman for giving and replaced it that same day. The Word of God says, "*Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you*" (Luke 6:38). Something similar to that incident happened three more times on that trip until we got home. We ran completely out of money four times on that trip, but God supplied at the last minute every time. He was building our confidence in Him and training us to trust Him to greater and greater levels.

The scriptures are filled with promises of God's provision for His people and for His work. We have developed sayings like, "Where God guides, He provides." That rhymes in English and is easy to remember and it is always true. If there is no provision, there is a reason. I will tell a story that I heard many years ago that illustrates that if there is a problem, there is a cause. If we fix the cause of the problem, we will have the blessing. Isaiah 59:1-2 says, "*Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear, but your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that He will not hear.*"

There was a small town whose pure water supply came from a natural spring in the hills behind the town. People in the town began to become sick and at first, the doctor could not determine the cause. Finally, he realized that all the people drank water from the same spring. The water was contaminated. They began to trace the flow of water from the town back into the hills to the spring to see if they could find the source of the contamination. Everything looked OK. There was a pool where the water bubbled out of the hill and formed a small stream that flowed down the hills into the town. It looked OK, but they decided to dive into the deep pool that formed at the base of the spring to see if perhaps there was something at the bottom. Sure enough, they found a pig that had fallen into the pool, drowned and had sunk to the bottom, out of sight. They removed the rotting carcass and the water became pure again.

In that same way, if we are not receiving the spiritual blessings promised in the Word of God, we look into our lives for the cause. Since the Bible says that sin separates us from God and His blessings, that's the first place we should look. There are two types of sins. There are sins of "commission," which are the things we do that we should not do. Then there are the sins of "omission," which are things that we should do but are not doing. Sins of commission don't have to be physical actions but can be attitudes in our heart. Actions always begin in the heart; first we think it, then we say it and finally we do it. Sin separates us from God and kills our faith and thus the assurance that God will do something we request. If we are not getting an answer to our prayer, we should always check ourselves first. Don't spend a lot of time doing this. If you are doing something you shouldn't, the Holy Spirit will let you know right away. If you think of something from your distant past and have repented of it and have not committed that sin again, it is forgiven and cast into the depth of the sea and never to be remembered by God (Micah 7:18-19; Jeremiah 31:34). If you are tormented by past sins that you have repented of, it is the devil that is reminding you in order to kill your confidence (faith) that God will answer your prayer and bless you. Stop it! God wants to bless you! Don't go fishing in the Sea of Forgetfulness to bring up your past sins. They are gone forever (Micah 7:19). Once you have a revelation of this truth, you will be able to exercise your confidence that God is on your side and wants to bless you. You can, with confidence, claim the promise of I John 5:14-15, *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."*

If you are not receiving the blessings of God and your prayers are not being answered, make sure there is no sin or disobedience in your life. Once that is resolved, you then begin to work on building and strengthening your faith. Faith comes from hearing and believing the Word of God. You may need to read it, hear it and quote it many times before it produces faith for your particular need. I call this stretching or reaching to the next level. God is not cruel to do this but think of it as if you are a child and your parent is training you to reach a bit higher or lift just a bit more. They are not being cruel, but they know that you will need to perform those tasks as an adult. God is preparing us for our destiny. He wants us to work together with Him, not for us to be like a small child who depends on his parents to do everything for us. God wants a partner to work **with** Him, not a toddler. Once you begin to partner with God and see what He does through you, you will never want to return to the past. Remember when Jesus did His first miracle of turning the water into wine? It was only the servants working with Him who saw and

knew what had actually happened. God is ready to promote you if you will allow Him to stretch your faith to believe for more. He is God. He is always faithful.

How to Receive God's Promises by Faith

Christians are rich spiritually, materially and physically but few are aware of this fact, believing that we are not to receive any of our inheritance here on earth but rather in Heaven when we die. However, the scriptures declare that our inheritance belongs to us now, for God promises *that "all things are yours ... whether the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours."* (I Corinthians 3:21-22) God has given us all things in Christ Jesus now as joint-heirs with Him (Romans 8:16-17; Galatians 4:5-7). He says that all things are yours now – in the world, in life, in the present, as well as in death and the life to come. If all things are yours in the present as well as in the future, then this means that you can enter into your inheritance right now if you will exercise the faith to appropriate it. What I'm trying to communicate is that we don't have to wait until we get to Heaven to experience God's blessings.

Jesus purchased all rights, privileges, wealth, dominion, power and authority in the Universe by His redemption on the cross of Calvary. You, as a joint heir, are seated with Him in the heavens (Ephesians 2:5-6). He says, "All things are yours" now in the present as well in the world to come. A prince does not need to wait until the king dies to enjoy the rights, privileges and provision of his father. In that same way, we have access NOW to all that we need to fulfill our position as a son or daughter of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Your inheritance does not have to be begged and pleaded for. God does not need to be persuaded, *"For all the promises of God in Him (Jesus) are yes and in Him Amen"* (II Corinthians 1:20a).

God not only promises that all things are your now, but He assures you that He has already said, "Yes" to all that He promises to you even before you ask. The answer is always, "Yes" to any promise God has made to you if you meet the conditions of faith. This means that you have not because you ask not (James 4:2).

The Scriptures are filled with divine assurances, privileges, rights, commissions, authorizations, rewards, powers, gifts, blessings and promises to each and every believer. God has made provision for every spiritual, physical and material need so that we can fulfill the work to which He has called His church to do. All these provisions are available to the extent that we are willing to press ahead by faith and appropriate them. How is this accomplished? There are five essential requirements of faith that we must recognize and observe in order to receive what God has promised.

Five Requirements of Faith

1. Your faith must be based on the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul declares that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). A better way of saying that is that Faith comes by hearing and BELIEVING the Word of God. **This is the whole secret of faith.** This is how we appropriate what God has promised. Our faith cannot rise above what we know that God has promised us in His Word, either

specifically or in principle. For example, specific promises are made to us in such passages as Matthew 6:33, James 5:15, Psalm 91 and Mark 16:17-20. The principle of faith concerning any problem, requirement or need is set forth in Mark 11:22-24 and Matthew 17:20.

Faith is believing that God will do for, in or through YOU what He has promised in His Word. Faith is believing God. God and His Word are ALWAYS in one accord. Believing the Word is believing God. God will fulfill every promise He has made to us, for *“God is not a man that He should lie; nor the son of man that He should change His mind. Has He said and will not do? Or has He spoken and will not bring it to pass?”* Numbers 23:19

The primary reason for a lack of faith among Christians today is that they do not know what God’s Word has promised to each and every believer and how they can receive it by faith.

2. Proclaim what your faith has embraced from God’s Word.

The second condition of Faith is to ASK. *“Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knock it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”* (Matthew 7:7-11). James 4:2 says that *“You have not because you do not ask.”*

When you ask, do it with simple childlike faith. You do not need to beg or persuade God to do what He has already offered to do for you. He has already said, “yes” to all His promises in Christ Jesus. *“For all the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him Amen.”* (II Corinthians 1:20) The word “amen” means “so be it” or “let it be done.” If God has already said, “yes” to everything He has promised to you even before you ask, then the answer you seek can never be “no” if you ask in faith. *“All things you ask in prayer believing, you will receive.”* (Matthew 21:22)

3. Boldly proclaim what you have believed by faith.

Confession brings possession. What you say with your mouth is your faith expressing what you really believe. Romans 10:10 tells us, *“For with the heart man believes... and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* Our mouth will eventually speak whatever is in our heart. Whatever we believe in our heart will be expressed by what we say. Listen to what you say. It may surprise you. If you have developed bad habits in what you say, then you must change what is in your heart and begin to say what God says. *“For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks* (Matthew 12:34). Fill your heart and mind with God’s Word.

Mark 11:23 also emphasizes the significant relationship between what we say or confess and receiving what we ask: *“For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘be removed and be cast into the sea.’ And does not doubt in his heart but believes that those **things he says** will be done, he will have **whatever he says.**”* We always receive what we say or confess. This is why the Scripture puts such a strong emphasis on a positive confession (Matthew 10:32-33;

I Timothy 6:12-13; James 1:6-7; Mark 11:22-24). If we believe God will do something for us but begin to express doubt and anxiety because the answer has not manifested itself yet, we will receive nothing. Confessions of doubt imprisons our faith so that it cannot be released for, *“you are snared by the words of your mouth”* (Proverbs 6:2).

There is a difference between the facts and the truth. The facts are the circumstances you are currently facing. The truth is what you know God says about your circumstances.

In 1983, my wife and I took our first mission trip through Asia and to Europe. We arrived in London, England and ran out of money. We had been traveling for three months and money had come into our bank account in the US but that did no good for we were in England. I had used almost all the money I had left to pay for one night at the hotel, expecting to get money transferred the next day to a bank in London. I called back home and sure enough, there was money in my account. PTL! However, because of the time difference, a bank holiday in England and the week end, it would be five days before I could get the money. What was I going to do? This was before ATM machines and Internet banking. I did not have a credit card. In the past, I had run out of money in the US, my home country, while I was traveling, and the Lord had supernaturally supplied but could He do it in a foreign country half way around the world?

I was not really worried because I knew two people in London. One was a lady who worked at the New Zealand Embassy. Surely, she would loan us some money until ours arrived. However, when I called the Embassy, I was told that she was on holiday in New Zealand. No problem, there was another person I knew. I called her but got no answer on her phone. No problem. I had a Bible School friend in Scotland. I called his phone number, but it was disconnected and there was no new number listed. All my plans fell apart and fear tried to enter into my heart. What was I going to do? We had enough money for food, if we were careful, but we had no place to stay.

Just before I went to talk with the innkeeper, I had told my wife, “I don’t know how God will do it, but we will have a place to stay tonight.” My confession was in line with God’s Word that says, “I will meet all your needs according to My riches in Glory.” However, I had no idea how God would do it. Too many times we try to figure out how God will answer our prayer. Just trust that he will somehow do it and leave it at that. The fact was, I did not have enough money to pay for a hotel room. The truth was that regardless of my present circumstances, God had promised to take care of our needs and He would certainly do it. Did I have faith that the innkeeper would allow us to stay? No. However, I had faith that God would take care of us somehow. My faith was in the ability of the Almighty, All Powerful God whom I served, not in anyone or anything else. Don’t look at the circumstances. Look at what God’s Word says and remember your past experiences with God when He has provided for you.

We prayed, and I went downstairs to tell the innkeeper about our money problem and it looked as though we couldn’t stay as long as we had hoped. There was a big sign behind the hotel desk that stated, “All Rooms, Cash in Advance.” Great man of faith and power that I was, I nervously told the innkeeper of our dilemma. He could see that I was a novice traveler and began to lecture me about how to transfer money, not to a bank but directly to my hotel. When he finished, he also said, contrary to the sign behind him, “You can stay until you get your money and pay me

then.” A miracle had just happened, the first step in seeing God meet all my needs according to His riches in glory. I honestly did not have faith that we could stay at that hotel, but I KNEW God would somehow supply. Faith is trust that God has a plan though we may not know what it is. The rest of the story is just as interesting, but I don’t have time to tell it all. However, let me say, “God took care of us in every detail but in totally unexpected ways.” He is ALWAYS faithful. Some people say, “Seeing is believing” but I always say, “Believing is seeing.”

When you are experiencing a trial of your faith, it is very important to remember your past victories of faith and how God supplied your needs. Actually, it is good to constantly be remembering and giving testimony of God’s provision for all our needs in the past.

This is something I discovered years ago, and it is VERY IMPORTANT for every believer to understand. In Psalm 78:40-42, the psalmist is recounting the journey of the Children of Israel in the desert. *“How often they provoked Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert. Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power: The day when He redeemed them from the enemy.”*

It is important to note that just as the children of Israel had the ability to limit Almighty God in their desert experience, we today also have that same ability to limit God’s work on our behalf. According to this scripture, we limit God by failing to remember. We think of remembering as bringing something to our mind from the past and thinking about it. However, the Hebrew word for “remember” is “*zakar*,” which has three parts. You don’t fully remember until you do all three of these parts. First is to bring something to your mind and think about it. Second is to make mention or talk about that thought. The third part is to make a memorial or do something that will constantly remind you of that original thought every time you see it. For instance, the Passover celebration and all the other feasts of Israel are to remind the people of what God has done for them in the past. The feasts constantly kept reminding them of God’s power working on their behalf. Another interesting thing about the word remember is that it is also the word for “male.” This is not because only the males were remembered in the genealogies found in the Bible but that the male carries the “seed of reproduction.” Therefore, whatever we remember, that is, what we bring back to our mind, talk about and make a memorial for, will be reproduced in our lives.

God receives glory when we tell of His great acts and it also encourages us to believe Him for even greater things. It’s called growing in faith. Give testimony of what God has done in your past and it will be reproduced in your future. If you don’t have a personal testimony of something you have need of, give the testimony of someone else. It builds your faith and that of others. Revelation 12:11 says, *“And they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”* The end-time saints will overcome Satan by the Blood of the Lamb and by what? Their testimony! Your testimony, what you remember, talk about and make a memorial to, is the next most powerful thing on earth after the Name and Blood of Jesus.

Let me caution you that this also works in the negative. If you plant seeds of negative experiences from your past, you are also planting seeds that will be reproduced in your future.

Only recall and meditate on, talk about and make memorials for the good things God has done for you, and you will be a blessed overcomer in this life.

If your confession or testimony of what you say about your problem does not agree with God's Word, then it is not faith speaking. The word "confess" in the New Testament Greek is *homologeō* and means "to agree with; to speak the same language; to confess." For instance, you may say, "I prayed for my back to be healed but I wonder why it doesn't seem to be getting any better? However, I'm hoping that it will be healed sometime." You can never expect to receive healing by faith if your confession does not agree with God's Word. His Word declares "*By His stripes we were healed*" (Isaiah 53:5). The reason for failure is clear. Jesus said when you pray believe you have received your request (Mark 11:24). He tells us that we are not to doubt but to believe that those things we requested will come to pass. Our initial confession and all subsequent confessions must remain in agreement with God's Word if we are to receive our request.

Myself and multitudes of people I have met from around the world can testify that this is all true and that Jesus Christ really is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is still in the prayer answering business and will work on your behalf when you meet the requirement of agreeing with His Word.

4. Act on your faith.

James 2:17 tells us that faith without works is dead. What does that mean? You could say it like this, "Faith without corresponding actions is dead." Corresponding actions means that your actions must agree with what you say. If you are not acting like you believe what you say you believe, you really don't believe it. In Mark 2:1-5 we read that Jesus "saw" the faith of the men who lowered the man sick of the palsy down through the roof. Obviously, you cannot see faith, but you can see *faith at work!* Jesus saw that they had faith because of their actions. They believed and acted according to that belief. Think about those men. They loved their friend so much that they thought and talked about what to do and came up with a plan to bring their friend to Jesus. Seeing that it was impossible to get in the front door of the house, they adjusted their plan to meet the new challenge. They had to get a ladder and tools to take off the roof of that house. They also knew that by destroying the roof of the house that it would cost them to repair it. They had also made a plan and had brought ropes to lower the bed. What great faith these men had. We must have the same determination and not allow circumstances and obstacles to stop us.

I was a telephone repairman when I became a Christian and within a year, I knew that the Lord was calling me to go to work for Him. I was going back to college but wasn't sure which one I should attend. I was repairing the phone of a man and began to witness to him. He told me that he was already a Christian and a deacon in the local Baptist Church. I told him that I was called by God to work for Him and was thinking about attending Oral Roberts University. In those days, most people in the US thought that you had to go to university to be qualified for full time Christian work. This man had been healed at an Oral Roberts meeting some 20 years earlier and shared his testimony. Baptist theology teaches that the days of healing and miracles have past

and that God does not heal today. He could not share his testimony openly at his church but he shared it with me and it impacted me as a young Christian.

This man, a farmer, had been diagnosed with cancer and had been told by doctors that he was dying. However, he had heard the stories of the thousands of people being healed through a healing evangelist, Oral Roberts, who himself had been supernaturally healed by God from Tuberculosis as a young man. The farmer shared that he had heard stories and had seen people giving testimonies on TV. He and his wife decided to go to his meetings. Oral Roberts was holding meetings in Miami, Florida, about 800 miles (1200 KM) away. He was so sick that he could not sit up so his wife drove the car and he lay in the back seat. When they arrived, sick people were everywhere with more than 1,000 people in attendance. They were in the back of the huge tent where the meeting was held. Oral Roberts prayed for the sick and many were healed. He said, if you didn't receive your healing tonight, come back tomorrow. They returned for two more nights and he was totally and completely healed by Jesus on the third night. Sometimes we need to do things we would not do if we were not desperate, like remove the roof of a house or driving several days. It is hope that encourages people to do these things by faith. *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1). By faith, that man and his wife traveled for several days to get to that meeting. He did not give up after the first day, or the second day. His faith grew as he saw and heard what God was doing. He did not give up just because he was sick and did not get healed at the first night's meeting. We must not be discouraged by the obstacles we encounter, or if our answer doesn't come the first day.

If you believe that it is going to rain, you will take a raincoat or an umbrella when you go out. Actions follow what you really believe. This man acted by faith in hope that He would be healed in spite of what his church doctrine taught. He acted by faith in what he hoped for, that Jesus would heal him. Do you have enough faith to act on what Jesus says in His Word? Are you listening to testimonies of faith, or words of unbelief?

When my children were young they would come to me and ask, "Dad, will you take us swimming?" When I said, "Yes, let me finish what I'm working on and I will take you." They would immediately go get their swimsuits and towels and wait for me by the door. They knew that if I promised to take them swimming, I would do it. They acted on what they believed. They knew that if I said, "Yes," I would do it. We need to have that same confidence in God's promises to us. *"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. If He has said it, He will do it. If He has spoken it, He will bring it to pass."* (Numbers 23:19).

In point 3 above, I shared about the hotel experience in London. That whole trip began almost three months earlier by faith. My wife and I worked at the US Center for World Missions in California and felt that God wanted us to take a mission trip to Asia to gain some cross-cultural experience. The Lord provided by giving me an opportunity to design and build a Christian radio station in the state of New Mexico in exchange for two around the world air tickets. Our departure date was set and we had determined that we would need a certain amount of money for expenses for the next three months of travel throughout Asia and Europe. The problem was that as our departure date approached, we did not have any money for those expenses. We had

traveled and preached in churches trying to raise money but were not successful. We had gone to our home church the night before and everyone was asking if we had our money for the trip. We answered, "Not yet." Then they would ask if we were still going to go. We would say, "Yes." We had no idea where the money would come from, but we had a word from God and people in Asia and Europe were expecting us and we had our air tickets. We had taken smaller steps of faith in the past and had seen the faithfulness of God to supply when traveling in our home country but never internationally. This was totally new for us. However, we believed God had told us to go so we packed and prepared to be gone for three months. We woke on the morning we were scheduled to leave, and we had \$5 between us. I remember saying to my wife, "Five dollars is not enough to pay for a ride to the airport. What would we do if we had all the money we needed?" We decided that we would go out for breakfast as an act of faith as if we had lots of money. Through three different sources, God supplied all the money we had asked for before noon that day. We had to take that step of faith and "acted" as if we had all the money we needed. Remembering that miracle of provision helped us to have faith (confidence) that God would also supply for us when we ran out of money in London almost three months later.

One of the secrets to having a strong faith (it's not really a secret) is to start by believing for small things and allow your faith grow. Believe God for small things at first and then larger and larger things as you grow. Normally, you shouldn't try believing God for BIG things if you have not had a bit of success in smaller things. My first act of faith for money was to believe God for \$20 registration fee to attend a Christian conference. It was really hard as a new believer to trust God for that amount of money. Years later, I believed God for \$100,000 USD for a church building and He supplied. Trust me. You can believe God for anything He tells you to believe Him for. However, you must begin small and gradually build up to bigger things. Babies crawl, then take small steps, walk and eventually learn to run. Babies don't run before they walk. Start small. If you have been given the "The Gift of Faith" you will bypass some of these stages of development in the use of that gift, but you will still need to learn to walk by faith for daily needs.

The key to having strong faith is to begin now; begin small and stretch yourself little by little until you have a mature faith. Don't ever give up. Have I ever failed? Yes, but I never gave up and I never quit. "Quitters never win, and winners never quit." The only people who never fail are the ones who never attempt anything out of the ordinary. Every man and woman of faith that I have gotten to know have failed at some point in their lives. They just don't talk about their failures in public. If you get to know them personally, they will tell you that in the beginning, they have failed. There is an old saying that I learned as a boy, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again." Do children learning to walk ever fall? Do Children of God learning to walk by faith ever fail? The answer to both questions is "Yes." However, the man or woman called of God will never quit or give up but will develop their faith and ultimately succeed in all that God has called them to do.

5. Hold firmly to your confession of faith.

Sometimes there are those who seek to appropriate a promise of God by faith. They claim the promise and confess it, but if it is not manifested immediately, or soon thereafter, they cannot maintain a positive confession of faith in God's promise. They begin to waver and doubt. The

problem is that they did not meet the first condition for receiving by faith. They did not firmly ground their faith solely in the Word of God. Their faith was partly on God's promise and partly on visible circumstances, feelings or their symptoms. In the story above, when people asked about the money for our first trip to Asia, I did not say, "No. I don't have the money" I said, "Not yet." Genuine faith never confesses what it sees or feels in the natural realm. Therefore, we are told, *"Let us hold tightly to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful"* (Hebrews 10:23).

Jesus tells us in Mark 11:24, that when we pray we are to believe that we have received *when we ask* and that *we shall see it manifested*. The significant thing to notice here is that it is always after we believe and confess that we have received that the answer is manifested. Remember God's Word is truth. There can be a difference in the facts and the truth. "The fact is that I don't have the money, but the truth is that my God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in Glory." The fact is that at this very moment, I do not have the money in my possession, but the truth is that my God has supplied the money and it will be here soon. Our faith in the truth of God's Word is greater than the present facts.

In John 9, the blind man's healing was not manifested immediately. He had to walk to the pool of Siloam and *after* he had washed, then he came back seeing. The 10 Lepers did not receive the manifestation of their healing when they asked, nor immediately after Jesus granted their request. They were healed *"as they went"* (Luke 17:12-14). Abraham waited many years for the manifestation of God's promise to him of a son, holding fast to his faith without doubting (Romans 4:17-21).

An important principle of faith that must be understood and kept constantly in our mind is, after we have claimed a promise of God by faith, then the form and content of our prayers, confession, actions and conversations must change.

Prayer

Once you have claimed a promise of God for something, then your prayers must change. You must not continue to ask for that thing but rather begin to give thanks to God that He has heard and granted your request and that the manifestation of the answer is on the way even though you don't see it yet. To continue to pray for the answer rather than giving thanks is unbelief. If you visit a friend's home and he asks if you would like a cup of coffee, you will say, "Yes, thank you," before you get the coffee because you know that you are about to receive it. That's the same way we should respond to God when we make a request. When we know that He has heard us, we say, "Thank You." We don't ask again but continue to give thanks for what He is about to do (Mark 11:24; Matthew 21:22).

Confession

After we pray the prayer of faith our confession must change from, "I believe God can heal me if I ask" to "I know that God has heard and granted my request for healing according the His Word." The confession of faith always refers to the past tense (He has healed me) and never the future (He will heal me). Our confession must not be based on what we see, feel or what our

outward circumstances seem to indicate, but solely on what God says He has done for us when we prayed.

Action

Not only must the form of our prayers and confessions change after we have claimed the promise of God by faith, but our actions must change to correspond with our faith. When we believe something, we will act according to that belief. When my wife and I were scheduled to go to Asia, though we did not have the money in our hands, we acted as if we had all the money we would need for the trip. We went out and spent the small amount of money we had believing that God would supply all that we would need. Our actions must change to conform to our confession of faith.

Conversation

Faith never thinks, talks, or listens to doubt, regardless of symptoms, pains, feelings, or apparent circumstances to the contrary. We are to *“hold fast to our profession of faith without wavering”* (Hebrews 10:23). Refuse to talk about your illness, your symptoms, your pains, or your problems. To talk about them is to admit that they belong to you. Since you receive what you confess, you should center your conversation on your faith in God’s promise to you and not on outward circumstances. Our circumstances change constantly but our God never changes. What He did for us last week, last month, last year, or what He has done for others, He will do for you if you will meet the conditions of faith in His Word, the Bible.

Chapter 3

How to Overcome Doubt and Fear

Have you often wondered why your prayers are so seldom answered, or why you are not healed though you thought you prayed the prayer of faith? Or perhaps you are wondering why there is so much defeat, worry and frustration in your life instead of the joy, peace and victory which a Christian is supposed to have? Have you wondered why your faith is so weak and inadequate? Do trials cause your faith to weaken and grow faint rather than strong and mature?

The Word of God gives you the reason. It is because of doubt. The temptation to doubt what God has promised in His Word is one of Satan’s most effective weapons to rob the Christian of peace of mind, healing, joy, material provision for your needs, spiritual power, strong faith, blessings and victory. The spiritual principle is found in James 1:5-7 and is applicable to any situation or promise in God’s Word that is appropriated by faith. *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.”*

Although we may ask in faith for an answer to our needs, if we later begin to doubt, Satan will rob us of the answer. God says that a doubter is like a wave of the sea; he wavers between faith and unbelief and is therefore unprepared to receive the very thing he seeks. He is like a wave in the sea, first rising with hope and then sinking down out of sight into the depths of doubt.

Whatever God has promised in His Word can only be received by faith. Doubt is a disease that eats away at your faith like a cancer. John 10:10 says that the devil comes to steal, kill and destroy. Jesus is the opposite. He comes to give us life and that more abundantly. Faith is from God; doubt is from Satan.

How to Overcome the Temptation to Doubt

1. The atonement of Jesus on the cross is sufficient for all your sins.

Is doubt a sin? Yes, it's one of the greatest. Faith comes from God's Word, doubt is from Satan. Romans 14:23 says, "*for whatever is not of faith is sin.*" Hebrews 11:6 tells us, "*but without faith it is impossible to please Him.*" Did Jesus die for all your sins? Then He died for your doubts. Cast all your doubts on the Lord and He will surely remove them (I Peter 5:7).

2. When you claim a promise of God, always ask in faith and expect an answer.

God wants to answer our prayers and fulfill His promises to us. That's why He made them. The only requirement is that we must ask in faith, not doubting. When we pray, we should expect an answer because Jesus said:

"Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them and you will have them" (Mark 11:24).

"If you have faith and do not doubt ... whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Matthew 21:21-22).

3. Always stop doubt at the doorway of your mind when it seeks to gain entrance.

The mind is the battleground and where Satan always attacks. Eph 6:11-18 tells us of the armor of God. The helmet of salvation is for our mind. Salvation in the Greek word "*soterios.*" It is associated with the word "saved" which includes salvation from sin, provision of our needs, protection, healing, deliverance and all we will need on earth and the life to come. Satan is a liar and comes to steal, kill and destroy but Jesus has come to give abundant life (John 10:10). The battleground is the mind. Satan tries to rob us of God's provision and stop us from advancing the Kingdom of God. If Satan can stop us from believing God's Word, he has defeated you. The battle is in the mind to doubt God's goodness and His provision. We must stop him at the door. How did Jesus defeat Satan when He was tempted in the desert? He quoted the Word of God. Fill your mind with God's word. Memorize scriptures and quote them when you are in a battle. Write notes in places where you will see it, like the bathroom mirror, on the back of your front door where you will see it each time you leave. The Word of God is our Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17).

4. When tempted to doubt, praise God and sing songs of faith and victory.

When I'm under attack to doubt and focus on my symptoms or problem, I praise God and sing songs aloud, but not too loud as my singing voice is not very good. I talk to the devil as Jesus did by quoting and reading Scripture and telling him that he and his symptoms are a lie. This encourages me and my faith is built up from speaking scripture. The Scriptures are my Sword of the Spirit, the only weapon we have to fight according to Ephesians 6. About a week ago, at exactly 8:30 AM, I had an attack of flu symptoms and nausea. A minute before, I felt great. I suddenly felt so sick that I could not do any of the work I had planned to do. By faith, I claimed my healing and began to do spiritual battle against the symptoms. I was tempted to go to the hospital, but I resisted. I remembered James 4:8 and drew near to God and resisted the devil. It is important to draw near to God first and make sure our relationship is in right standing. I repented of every bad attitude and any sin of commission or omission that came to mind and drew near to God and continued to resist the devil. I prayed for others and everything that came to mind. At 4:30 PM, exactly eight hours later, all symptoms left just as suddenly as they had arrived.

Regardless of our symptoms, the battle is in the mind. Over the years when I would have an unusual pain, the devil would tell me something like, "you have cancer." I would respond by saying something like, "Devil, you are a liar and the father of all lies. I rebuke you in the Name of Jesus. *'For the weapons of my warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing every thought captive unto the obedience of Christ.'* (I Corinthians 10:4-5). I reject these symptoms in the Name of Jesus and I tell you to go and not come back. I refuse to be sick because I am healed by the blood of Jesus and by His stripes on the cross according to I Peter 2:24. I reject every thought that tries to tell me I am sick, and I tell you to be silent. I refuse to be sick. I resist and reject every symptom in the Name of Jesus and I command healing to flow into my body in Jesus Name."

I then spend time praying in the Spirit (Romans 8:26). I may have to repeat this kind of warfare prayer several times but eventually, the devil will give up and leave. Attacks like this remind me that I am dependent on the grace of God and the power of His Word. I'm almost 72 years old at this writing and have not been to the doctor in years for anything other than a check-up. I have opportunities to get sick from time to time when some symptom comes but I just follow the Bible advice in James 4:7, *"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...."*

5. Never confess doubt or unbelief.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7). Fear comes first by little questions that cause us to doubt God's Word. Proverbs 18:21 declares that death and life are in the power of the tongue. Fill your heart and mind with God's word for *"out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks"* (Matthew 12:34). If we are to receive what we request from God, we must be in agreement with Him regarding our request and not wavering (See James 1:6-7). Any confession of doubt is your own admission

that you are defeated and Satan is victor. Adopt the vocabulary of faith and don't allow yourself to use expressions of doubt.

6. Refuse to listen to the doubts of others.

Don't allow others to discourage you by speaking doubt about what you are trusting God for. Don't associate with negative people—especially when you are going through a trial of your faith. They will undermine and weaken your faith. Never discuss the problem you have committed to the Lord or God's promise you have claimed by faith, with those who do not believe God answers prayer based on His Word. Their skepticism and unbelief will implant doubt in your heart.

7. Regularly study God's Word and pray.

The most powerful remedy for doubt is a closer walk with God. *"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God"* (Romans 10:17). *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you"* (James 4:8). *"Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby"* (I Peter 2:2). *"...building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,"* (Jude 1:20).

Resist doubt like you would any other temptation to sin. James 4:7 tells us to *"Resist the devil and he will flee from you."* Never open the door to doubt and faith will take its place as you study God's Word. Faith and doubt can never exist together; if one is present, the other is absent. Which will it be? Faith or doubt?

Chapter 4

How to Pray the Prayer of Faith

More books have been written on prayer than any other Christian subject, yet it remains the most mis-understood practice for most Christians. Often you will hear a Christian say, "I have prayed and prayed but still have not received." Why is this? This is because many do not know how to pray the prayer of faith. Even Jesus' disciples confessed that they did not know how to pray effectively. They asked, *"Lord, teach us to pray"* (Luke 11:1).

The Bible teaches that there are certain essential principles of prayer that we must observe if our prayers are to be effective.

1. Pray with a repentant heart.

Before you make your requests known, you must make sure that there is nothing blocking your relationship with the Lord. I John 3:21 says, *"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God."* One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin. If there is sin in your life, you cannot have the confidence that God will hear and answer your prayer. King David said, *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"* (Psalm 66:18).

James speaks of the necessity of confession in connection with the prayer of faith for healing the sick (James 5:14-16). Also see I John 1:8-10; 3:20-22. Unconfessed sin can block or hinder your prayer from being answered. These can include sins of the spirit which are things like pride, selfishness, doubt, hatred, etc., or sins of the flesh, which are things you do contrary to the Word of God.

2. Pray with a forgiving spirit.

Effective prayer can be hindered by not having a right relationship either with God, or with others here on earth. After Jesus taught principles of faith in Mark 11:23-24, He continued teaching in verses 25-26 saying, *“And when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in Heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive your trespasses.”*

Many prayers are not answered because of failure to meet this condition. Anger, hatred, resentment, bitterness and unforgiveness will block your prayers and blessings from God. When I was youth pastor many years ago, a young woman visitor came to one of our meetings. We had a prayer time at the end of the meeting and she wanted to receive healing for a problem she was having. We gathered around and prayed but there was no manifestation of the healing. I felt prompted to ask if she had any resentment or bitterness towards anyone. After a moment, she answered and said, “I can’t think of a living soul.” I immediately heard the still small voice of the Holy Spirit say, “Ask her about someone who is no longer living.” I then asked, “What about someone who is dead?” Immediately an angry expression came across her face and she said, “Yes, my uncle, but he’s dead. What has he to do with anything?” I told her that she must forgive if she wanted God to answer her request. She repented for her resentment, forgave him and was immediately healed. She had been prayed for many times but that one bit of anger and resentment toward someone, though they had already died, was holding back her blessing.

3. Pray in Jesus’ Name.

“Therefore, God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in Heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11). It is only through Jesus Christ that we have access to the Father, *“For through Him we ... have access by one spirit unto the Father”* (Ephesians 2:18). Many neglect this essential requirement by praying to the Father but neglecting to do it in the Name of Jesus. The Bible clearly tells us, *“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him”* (Colossians 3:17). Jesus said, *“Whatever you ask the Father in My Name, He will give it to you”* (John 16:23b). I often hear people make public prayers and end them with “In your name we pray.” The Bible tells us to ask the Father in Jesus Name. We do not pray to Jesus. Jesus told us to ask the Father in His Name. No wonder so many prayers go unanswered. However, God often overlooks our ignorance; but, as leaders, we should know this elementary principle.

4. Pray according to the will of God.

Obviously, God cannot answer prayer that is not according to His will. I John 5:14-15 says, *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”* This verse tells us that we must base our faith on what God has promised in His Word. We cannot pray and expect God to reveal the date of the second coming of Jesus nor can we expect God to forgive our trespasses if we are unwilling to forgive others (Mark 11:22-26). However, we can pray for the healing of our diseases (James 5:14-15; Isaiah 53:4-5), or God’s provision for our material needs (Matthew 6:33; Philippians 4:6,19), since we have these promises in His Word. You must know the Word of God to know your benefits and responsibilities if you are going to be an effective prayer warrior.

5. Pray with expectation.

You should know by now that if we are to pray the prayer of faith, we must pray expecting an answer, yet many people fail at this crucial point. *“And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive”* (Matthew 21:22). Praying in faith is simply believing that God will do for you what He has promised in His Word. You can pray effectively only with as much faith as you have in Jesus Himself and are willing to trust Him. To the extent we believe Him, this is the extent of our faith. Thus, if we do not receive, it is only because we do not really believe that He will do what He promised to do. Prayer only knocks on the door; faith is the key that unlocks it!

Conclusion

You can have great faith.

Faith Scriptures

Mt. 6:33 – “But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.”

Mt. 7:7-8 – “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

Mt. 17:20 – “...for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

Mt. 18:19-20 - “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Mt. 19:26 – But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible but with God, all things are possible.”

Mark 9:23 – Jesus said to them, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”

Mark 11:22-23 – “For assuredly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

Mark 11:24 – “Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them and you will have them.”

Mark 16:17-18 – “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

John 10:10 – “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

John 14:12-13 – “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

John 16:23-24 – “And in that day you will ask Me nothing, Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

Romans 8:28 – “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

Romans 8:37 – “Yet in all things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Romans 10:17 – “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

II Cor. 1:20 – “For all the promises in Him are Yes and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.”

II Cor. 5:7 – “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

Eph 3:20 – “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”

Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:19 – “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

II Tim. 1:7 – “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Heb. 2:14 – “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

Heb. 10:23 – “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

Heb. 10:35-36 – “Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

Heb. 11:1 – “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Heb. 11:6 – “”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.”

James 1:5-6 – “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, without doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.”

James 2:26 – “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

II Peter 3:9 – “The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

I John 3:8b – “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

I John 4:4 – “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

III John 2 – “Beloved, I wish above all things that ye prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers.”

Exodus 15:26 – “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.”

Num. 23:19 – “God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man that he should repent. Has He said and will He not do? Has He spoken and will He not make it good?

I Kings 8:56 – “Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promises, which He promised through His servant Moses.”

Psalm 1:3 – “He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.”

Ps. 34:4, 6-7 – “I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them.”

Psalm 37:4 – “Delight yourself also in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

Psalm 37:23-24 – “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he may fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand.”

Psalm 91:1-16 -

Ps. 103:1-5 – “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is restored like the eagle’s.”

Ps. 105:8 – “He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations.”

Isa. 40:31 – “But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary and shall walk and not faint.”

Isa. 53:4-5 – “Surely He has borne out griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

Jer 29:11, 13 – “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you and future and a hope. And you will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”

Jer 33:3 – “Call to me and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”

Hab. 2:4b- “But the just shall live by faith.”