

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN F E L L O W S H I P

Foundations of Faith II **First Faith**

Last week we considered **What is Faith?**

(And some of what it is not)

- Then three steps to access living by faith
- Surrender, Submission & Subjection
- **How important is faith?**

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Paul writes in **I Timothy 4:1**, "Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith"

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In **Jude 3** we read, "I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith** which was **once for all** delivered to the saints."

.....
Paul & Peter both warn repeatedly to be aware of assaults compromising the faith from inside the church

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Hebrews 11:6, "Now without faith it is **impossible** to please God"

- Pleasing God is more than important...
- **It is essential**

.....
God **wants** to be pleased with us

- **He sacrificed His Son** to make it possible
- "For **by grace** you have been saved" (**Ephesians 2:8**)

God makes our salvation available **by His grace...**

- And we access it **by faith**
- "For by grace you have been saved **through faith**" (**Ephesians 2:8**)
- God provides – We believe
- **Nothing blesses Him or us more!**

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Because **God is Infinite...**

- There is **always more of Him** for us to access by faith
- The first disciples must have perceived this

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Luke 17:5, The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

- Maybe they remembered He taught, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (**Matthew 5:6**)

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Would you like your faith to be increased like they did?

- How did He respond? (**Vs. 6-10**)

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Vs. 6, So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

- If your faith is grounded in **God's natural order of life first...**
- Your growth will come as surely as that tree grows from seed to maturity.
- So, how does God's natural order work in our lives of faith?

.....
Vs. 7-8, “And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’?”

.....
The disciples say to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”
- We want more

.....
And He replied, **Here’s how life in God’s creation works...**

- Including you and your growth in faith

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Were they **slipping** into thinking they were **more than servants**?

- Jesus addressed their ambitions several times

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Matthew 20:25-28, But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet **it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.** And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— **just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**”

- Had they ever seen Him treat someone **as if He were their boss**?
- **Jesus led by example**, and calls us to follow Him in it

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Romans 12:2, And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- **This is about more than theology**
- How much of the church is following **the world’s example** of structure & leadership?

Vs. 9-10, “Does he **thank that servant** because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, **when you have done all those things which you are commanded**, say, ‘We are **unprofitable servants**. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

.....
Holman Christian Standard calls them, “good for nothing slaves”

ESV, NIV & NLT all say “unworthy servants”
The Greek means, “**Unmeritorious slave**” or bond servant, **in subjugation**.

- This is what we aspire to...
(Surrender, Submission & Subjection)

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I think they all fail to communicate “**Unmeritorious**” well – without merit.

- Meaning – **We merit nothing** by our service to our Master
- We’ve earned **NOTHING!** Including our faith

.....
Ephesians 2:8-9, For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; **it is the gift of God**, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

- **He gives**, we receive... or not

.....
“For **by grace** you have been saved **through faith**”... both as gifts of God

- “Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (**Matt.5:3**)
- The **FIRST** promised blessing Jesus taught

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What is His answer to how we increase our faith?

- Keep doing our **first faith** – humble **work!**
- True faith **never** outgrows humility & service

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Embrace **the heart of a servant** in faith, and work like one

- Servants don’t do what they want
- **They do what they’re told**, like Jesus did (**John 5:19 & 30**)

Philippians 2:5-8, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead, He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (James 4:10 & I Peter 5:6)

.....
Colossians 3:23-24, And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

- We don't earn & deserve the reward
- **We inherit it** as family with Jesus
- He took **what we deserved**, so we could inherit **what is His**