

Introduction:

- Our path this year has brought us to three pivotal messages for overcoming in times of challenge: Heb 2:1 Listen or you may drift. Ex 33:11-ff Show me your glory. And John 16:33 Take Heart I have overcome the world. All of these messages have been given to help us be a people who overcome by embracing the truth while facing challenges.
- Great faith is born in adversity for the one who has little faith. I don't know about you, but I really don't have a way of measuring my faith until I have overcome in adversity. Three things I want to look at this morning: Faith Comes By Hearing, Faith Grants Access, Faith Takes a Stand.

I. Faith Comes By Hearing

- A. This is what I know. *"So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."* (Romans 10:17, NLT)
1. Faith comes by hearing Good News about Christ. Faith comes by hearing (the message) the rhema about Christ. IE. *"In Lystra, Paul and Barnabas encountered a man who from birth had never walked, for he was crippled in his feet. He listened carefully to Paul as he preached. All of a sudden, Paul discerned that this man had faith in his heart to be healed. So he shouted, "You! In the name of our Lord Jesus, stand up on your feet!" The man instantly jumped to his feet, stood for the first time in his life, and walked!"* (Acts 14:8-10, TPT)
 2. The passion translation says, *"Faith, then, is birthed in a heart that responds to God's anointed utterance of the Anointed One."* (Romans 10:17, TPT)
 3. The Word of God that comes to us via the Holy Spirit will be an anointed word or a Word that comes to us as revelation. FF Bosworth said, "Faith begins where the will of God is known." In other words, "It is God's Word that lets us know what to trust Him for."
 4. So if I am going to have great faith I have to at least start with a little bit of faith. And Jesus said, faith the size of a mustard seed can move a mountain!
- B. Who do we turn to, to build our faith? We turn to those sources that give us the Word, the 'rhema' word.
1. Start with the Bible! Last week I referred to this a part of the basics we must do in order to face and overcome challenges.
 2. Listen to anointed teachers of the Word! Please give yourselves to the Word that gives life and not the news that sucks life out of you. Trouble breeds uncertainty and uncertainty takes life away from you. News reports are 98% trouble, therefore breeding uncertainty.
 3. Bible studies - where people gather to grow in Christ/grow in the Word.
 4. If we are to abound in faith we have to abound in the Word!
- C. Faith is tested in trials. *"For you know that when your faith is tested it stirs up power within you to endure all things."* (James 1:3, TPT)
1. To test means to be under God's watchful eye. He is the coach, the drill instructor, the Master Sergeant.
 2. To be tested is to learn the will of God. God instructing us. Sharpening us in the Word.

3. To be tested is to learn how much faith we have. *"Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith."* (2 Corinthians 13:5, NLT)
- D. You never know how much you have until it is tested! Is your faith being tested? Knowing that it is happening under the watchful eye of the Captain of Heavens Armies, does this affect how you respond to life?

II. Faith Grants Access

- A. To the promise land. Everyone has access to the promises! "Whosoever!" But only those with faith access what the promises promise! *"For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory."* (2 Corinthians 1:20, NLT) We get access by faith and He gets the glory!
 1. The ESV says, "All the promises find their YES in Him.
 2. That YES brings Him glory for He is now shining through earthen vessels.
- B. If Faith grants us access then doubt becomes our denier.
 1. If you do not believe you do not access the promise. Or if you do not believe the promise will do you no good.
 2. The no good promise: *"For this good news—that God has prepared this rest—has been announced to us just as it was to them. But it did them no good because they didn't share the faith of those who listened to God. For only we who believe can enter his rest. As for the others, God said, "In my anger I took an oath: 'They will never enter my place of rest,' " even though this rest has been ready since he made the world."* (Hebrews 4:2-3, NLT)
 - a) The promise does no good to those who are not in faith. Heb 4:6 says that they did not enter because of disobedience...which was caused by lack of faith or trust in God. *"So we see that because of their unbelief they were not able to enter his rest."* (Hebrews 3:19, NLT)
 - b) The promise comes through to those who believe!
- C. The war begins when you cross over into your promised land. Eph 6:12 *We fight not* ...against flesh and blood but against principalities, power, spiritual rulers in high places. That is a devil at every level!
 1. Their objectives are:
 - a) Guard the territory from Christ's truth
 - b) Keep people in spiritual ignorance get them to focus on FB, Twitter, and fake news.
 - c) Influence the governing leadership
 - d) Oppose Christ's ministers
 - e) Turn the hearts away from Christ and His Truth
 2. The good news is that when you cross over God fights for you. IE, Jericho. Also: 2 Chron 20:15 "This is my battle says the Lord..."
 3. The challenge to us is that we must now enter the fight. We enter the fight and He starts fighting for us.
 - a) What is happening? God is taking those with faith and bringing them into a place of great faith. He takes us from glory to glory. Ever increasing faith!

- b) IE. Caleb -
 - (1) Caleb had faith to take the land as a spy in Moses day.
 - (2) Now Caleb has great faith to drive out the giants on his 'God given mountain!' And at 80 years of age...he is entering a place of greater faith.
- c) The moment you cross over into the land of promises the war is on. The devil does not want you operating in faith. Faith makes you dangerous! So, he does everything he can to get you out of the place of faith and into doubting God.
- 4. But the promises work for those who believe.
- D. Faith Requires we take a stand.

III. Faith Takes A Stand

- A. Paul to Timothy: *"Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles. Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked."* (1 Tim 1:18-19, NLT)
 - 1. Fight with Word of God. The truths you have been given.
 - 2. Fight with prophecies given to you. IE. Movies are made out of prophecies given to people. Conan the Barbarian, Eli, The White Tree of Gondor in Lord of the rings. (White tree on the chest armor, Blooms when King returns.) etc
 - 3. Cling to your faith - Gr. means 'to have' 'to own' 'to possess' "Cling to your faith! Not mine!" You must have your own faith Timothy!
 - 4. Keep a clear conscience. Those who violate conscience shipwreck their faith.
- B. Paul to the Ephesians: *"A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places."* (Ephesians 6:10-12, NLT)
 - 1. Be strong means to be growing strong. Always increasing in strength.
 - 2. It assumes the potential to grow and become stronger. Don't stay where you are keep on growing.
 - a) In Him or In Christ...the anointed One
 - b) In His control, His supremacy, His superiority.
 - c) All of this is for you "to be able!/to prevail" In Mt 16:18 says the gates of hell will not prevail. The same word is used there: The gates of hell will not be able/will not prevail. And when it look difficult and is difficult ...
 - 3. STAND! Imperative! Command! Eph 6:11 says stand against! The call to us is to stand against...devils at every level! Not matter where you meet them stand against them. And having done all to stand. Stand! After the battle you will still be standing
 - a) *"Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong."* (1 Corin 16:13, NLT)

- b) Give others encouragement. *"So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith. It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord."* (1 Thessalonians 3:7-8, NLT)
- c) *"With all these things in mind, dear brothers and sisters, stand firm and keep a strong grip on the teaching we passed on to you both in person and by letter."* (2 Thes. 2:15, NLT)
- d) *"... for it is by your own faith that you stand firm."* (2 Corinthians 1:24, NLT)
- C. When we learn to stand in faith, we will begin to have in mind the biblical emphasis capture in these phrases: These will begin to describe us:
1. *"rooted and grounded"* (Eph 3:17)
 2. *"having done all, to stand firm"* (Eph 6:13)
 3. *"stand firm thus in the Lord"* (Phi 4:1)
 4. *"not carried away with the error of lawless people"* (2 Pet 3:17)
 5. *"we will reap, if we do not give up"* (Gal 6:9)
 6. *"suffering produces endurance"* (Ro 5:3)
 7. *"stay awake"* (Mt 24:42)
 8. *"the one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death"* (Rev 2:11)
 9. *"keep alert with all perseverance"* (Eph 6:18)
 10. *"the one who endures to the end will be saved"* (Mk 13:13)

Conclusion:

- In 1990, Georgene Johnson of Cleveland, Ohio, was a bit depressed after turning 42. She decided that she wanted to be in better shape for the second half of her life. So, Georgene began exercising, then jogging, then running. She decided that what she really needed was a goal on which to focus, so she entered herself in a 10K (6 mile) race and began training. The day of the race she was pumped and ready to go. She arrived early and was soon distracted by all the other runners as they prepped and stretched. Before you knew it, the horn sounded for the runners to line up, and Georgene followed the pack to the starting line, and they were off! Four miles into the race, with no turnaround in sight, Georgene asked a fellow runner when they could expect to start heading back. "He just kind of looked at me strangely like, 'Are you for real?'" It was then that she realized she was not in the 10K race at all. She was in the Cleveland Marathon! Both races shared the same finish line, but the 10K was set to start 15 minutes after the marathon. Because she was early (and distracted), she lined up too soon. So she just kept running, looking for someone to help. Twenty-six miles later, she crossed the finish line. Her previous longest race was just 8 miles. It is reported that when asked what went through her mind as she faced the challenge, she replied, "This is not the race I trained for. This is not the race I entered. But for better or worse, this is the race that I am in."

APPLICATION: No doubt, there will be moments when you find yourself a bit overwhelmed by your circumstances. It won't be a race you've trained for, it won't not be a race you've entered, but it will be the race your in. At that point you will have to decide what you're going to do.

- Stand in faith!
- And having taken a stand, the Promise will manifest for you!