

Introduction:

- *"The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"*" (Luke 17:5, ESV)
- Knowing certain things will increase our faith.

I. Faith Comes By Hearing The Word

- A. I know of no other way by which faith can come. I find no other way in the word by which faith comes. Though I do believe that God provides for us specific aid/helps to strengthening our faith.
- B. *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."* (Romans 10:17, ESV) *"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—"* (1 Peter 2:2, ESV) Long for/ crave for the word.

1. Nature of the Word

- a) The Word is Spirit and Life. *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."* (John 6:63, ESV)

(1) Spirit - pneuma, breath.

(2) Life - Zoe - God kind of life.

- b) The Word is Living and Active. *"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12, ESV)

(1) Alive - Ζωω - Zao - To be alive. From Zoe - life with vitality.

(2) Active - ενεργές - energy. To be filled with active zeal or the power of God.

(3) Piercing - penetrating spirit soul and body

(4) Discerning - nothing is hidden from His eyes. It judges all it sees. The word is therefore able to convict and shape character.

- c) The Word is sent by God.

(1) The Word is mission minded/it is sent. It has a mission/purpose to accomplish. *"so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."* (Isaiah 55:11, ESV)

(2) God sent His Word: *"He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction."* (Psalm 107:20, ESV)

(3) God sent His Son (The Word) into the world that the world through Him might be saved.

2. The Word must be heard!

- a) *"And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you who hear."* (Mark 4:24, AMP) Be careful what you are hearing! Hearing can

created faith just as it can create unbelief. So give yourself to the word!

- b) *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."* (Romans 10:17, ESV)
- (1) FF Bosworth in *Christ The Healer*. "Faith begins where the will of God is known." And "It's God's word that lets us know what to trust Him for." Pp 81

II. Helps To An Ever Increasing Faith

- A. Follow examples. Examples do three things:
1. Model faith-they show how it is to be done. (It is like having instructions.)
 2. Inspire faith - we see others success. (God is no respecter of persons.)
 3. Imitate faith- that kind of faith. (Act on the word)
 4. IE...The great cloud of witnesses are those of chapter 11 and can be those of great faith in your life time. Heb 12:1
 5. IE...Looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith. Heb 12:2
- B. A second help is "Build yourself up in your most holy faith." *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,"* (Jude 20, ESV)
1. epokodoméō - to build on something or to build further. Ie. *"According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it."* (1 Corinthians 3:10, ESV) Build upon what you have. Everyone has a measure of faith, build on it. (Ro 12:3)
 2. Praying - talking to God. If you do not talk you never get to know a person. Some people have trouble praying because they do not know who they are talking to.
- C. A third help: Remember what God has done before. When you heard the word, believed and received.
1. Basically the Jewish feasts are all reminders of what God has done.
 2. Dt 5:15; "Remember you were a slave in Egypt but the Lord brought you out."
 3. The memorial stones after crossing the Jordan into the promised land was to be a remembrance.
- D. Number 4: Start where you are. David had faith for a flock before he had faith for a nation. David killed lions and bears before he killed Goliath.
- E. God does not create trials to build our faith. He creates opportunities for us to exercise our faith. He uses circumstances to test what /if we believe.
1. Again, it is the Word that builds faith.
 2. IE. Judges 3:1-4
 - a) God left enemies in the land to test Israel, those who did not know war.
 - b) The test was to see if they would obey/believe the word.

III. The Power of the Word

- A. It reveals the Father. *"Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"* (John 14:9, ESV) He is for us not against us.
- B. And it release the power. The power can only be claimed where the will of God is known. Therefore, we must be people of the Word. Ie. FF Bosworth: *"The Power of God can be claimed only where the will of God is known."* pp 80.
- C. Abraham grew in power in his faith. *"No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,"* (Romans 4:20, ESV) grew strong is Hebrew word: *endynamóō* both mean "to give power," "to make strong," "to strengthen." Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985).

Conclusion:

- Your measure of faith is only active or activated, when you depend on God for the outcome.
- Faith come by hearing the Word. To increase faith you must increase the Word!
- *"For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."* (Matthew 13:12, ESV)