

Week 41 – Growing your Faith: Choose to Use It!

Building Faith

“A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse – after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. For she thought, ‘If I just touch His garments, I will get well.’ Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, ‘Who touched My garments? And His disciples said to Him, ‘You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, “Who touched Me?”’ And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction.’” (Mark 5:25-34)

The story of the woman with the chronic illness who found healing encapsulates a number of lessons on faith that we can employ today.

Hear the Word of God (Mark 5:27).

The woman heard of Jesus’ power to heal prior to believing for her healing. Faith thrives in hearts that feed upon God’s Word. As stated in the Westminster Confession, faith is “ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word.” This was certainly the case through the ministry of Jesus. As Jesus spoke God’s Word, faith would come in the hearts of those listening. The same is true today. Hearing the word builds our faith. It is a good habit to listen to the word through every available means as often as possible: “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). Additional verses for Study: Mark 7:25; Luke 5:15, 6:17-19, 7:3

Believe the Word of God (Mark 5:28).

The woman believed all things were possible through Jesus, even the “impossible” situation of her incurable sickness. Believing begins with the heart that is set on the Lord (Romans 10:10). The mind cannot conceive what the heart does not believe. Believing begins in the heart! “Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him” (Mark 11:23). Faith is not to be conceived as something some can have but others who are less fortunate do not have. Romans 12:3 says each one of us has a “measure of faith.” As believers, we must use the faith we have by believing the promises of God.

Confess the Word (Mark 5:28).

Before she was healed she was saying aloud, “If I just touch his garments I shall get well.” Proverbs 18:21 confirms that the power of life is in the tongue. Words can have creative capacity. In the beginning, God said, “Let there be light,” and it was so! Believing hearts find it easy to confess the truth of God’s Word (Romans 4:17; James 3:3-5). As Jesus said, “Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34). When faith fills our hearts, words of faith will overflow out of our mouths. Faith-filled words have power.

Act upon the Word (Mark 5:27).

After the woman heard and believed, she acted upon her faith. This produced the resulting miracle (from a human perspective, of course). Faith can be described as a belief in action. According to James 2:17, “faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.” Real faith goes from believing a truth to acting on the truth. Many people acknowledge the truth of Christ’s salvation but fail to act on that truth, hence remaining as lost as the worst atheist. As James wrote, “So you believe there is one God? You do well. The devils also believe, and tremble!” (James 2:19) Those who attend church their entire life, but never act on God’s word, find it powerless. In the words of the late Dr. D. James Kennedy, “He who does not act upon what he has heard is simply a man who does not believe. The man who is not moved to a correspondent action or volition by what he hears is a man without faith”.

As you do these things – hear, believe, confess and act upon the Word – He will prove Himself faithful to you and your faith will grow. Your faith may begin small. You may at times be hesitant, but as you remain consistent, you will become like Abraham who, “did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Romans 4:20).

In 1 Corinthians 12:9, the Bible includes faith as a gift. Why not ask God for this gift so we might accomplish more for His glory than we could ever imagine? As James 4:2 says, “You do not have because you do not ask.” The Lord Jesus encouraged us to ask: “Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive that your joy may be made full” (John 16:24). Ask God for this dynamic gift of faith to be yours today!

Review

1. Select a “mountain” in your own life that needs to be moved.
2. Select several verses from the Bible that deal with this issue.
3. Pray these verses to God every day, explaining to Him why, on the basis of His reveal will, the answer you request is appropriate.
4. Believe, confess, and act upon these scriptures.

5. When you have an answer, go to step 1 and repeat the process, with the next mountain.