



FAITH: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO HAVE IT

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Faith: What It Is and How to Have It

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 10:17-21

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2069

Adrian Rogers says, "Faith makes God's grace available and real to us. Grace is God's ability, and faith is man's responsibility."

In the Kingdom of God, our faith is the measure of our victory and success. Our belief is our greatest spiritual asset and richest currency. Conversely, unbelief is our greatest stumbling block. This is why there is an immediate urgency to receive what grace provides through faith in God.

Romans 10 reveals the intricacies of faith, what it is, and how to have it.

First, we must consider the object of our faith in order for it to be real.

When we rely on the wrong things, it can be dangerous to our spiritual health. We do not rely on positive thinking, or even on faith itself. True biblical faith is placed in Jesus Christ, alone.

Adrian Rogers says, "If the object of your faith is God, then the ambition of your heart ought to be to know Him."

Once we confirm the object of faith, we see it originates from the Word of God.

Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

In order to grow spiritually, we must hear from God; we cannot know the will of God by guessing at it. Faith cannot be generated; it is given, as Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

When God speaks to us through His Word and Jesus Christ, we will see the result of our faith, which is the Will of God.

The objective of our faith is to get God's will done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

God is sovereign; He remains in control at all times. What He says He will do, He will accomplish. We have the beautiful opportunity to take part in His Will, through faith.

Finally, we must know the operation of faith, which is the work of God. We do not work for our salvation, but our obedience to Him is proof that we believe in Him.

Life Application

True faith does more than merely believe; it translates into action. When you pray and ask God what to do, and how to accomplish His Will for your life today, trust and obey Him.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The book of Romans is the foundation for our faith; it is the constitution of Christianity, and it tells us a great deal about the grace of God.
- b) Grace is a beautiful word that can be expressed in an acrostic as: "G-R-A-C-E: God's Riches At Christ's Expense."
 - i) That means Jesus Christ on the cross, dying in agony and blood for our sins, provided for us all of the riches of God.
 - ii) Romans 10:12
- c) But you need faith in order to lay hold of what grace provides.
 - i) It is only through faith that the grace of God can come into your life.
 - ii) Ephesians 2:8-9
 - iii) An acrostic for F-A-I-T-H is: "Forsaking All I Trust Him."
 - (1) Forsaking all good works, good intentions, your sin, all that you are by nature and the first birth, you turn your back on all of that and take Jesus.
 - iv) When you put your hand of faith in God's hand of grace, that's salvation.
 - v) Grace is God's ability. Faith is man's responsibility.
 - (1) Jesus died, but we must believe and receive, or the death of Jesus does us no good whatsoever.
 - vi) All that we receive, we receive by faith.
 - (1) Do you want to be saved?
 - (a) Romans 5:1
 - (2) Do you want to be sanctified?
 - (a) Acts 15:9
 - (3) Do you want your prayers answered?
 - (a) 1John 5:4
 - (4) Do you want to overcome the world?
 - (a) Mark 11:24
 - vii) It is faith that is the medium of exchange in the Kingdom of Heaven.
 - (1) Matthew 9:29
 - (2) Your faith is the measure of your victory, your success; all of the things that grace provides, they come to us by faith.
- d) This is why it is so extremely important that we learn what faith is and why Paul, who has been talking about the grace of God, begins to talk about faith in that grace.
 - i) Romans 10:17-21
- e) Faith is not just a nicety; it is a necessity. And lack of faith (unbelief) is not weakness, it is wickedness.
 - i) Anyone who chooses not to believe cannot use the excuse that they are unable to believe, because the Lord has given a measure of faith to every person.



- (1) Romans 12:3
- ii) Unbelief is a terrible, horrible sin. It is slander against the character of God.
 - (1) 1 John 5:10
 - (2) It was unbelief that led Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden.
 - (3) It was unbelief that kept the children of Israel from the Promised Land and caused them to wander in the wilderness.
- iii) Unbelief sends men to Hell.
 - (1) John 3:18
 - (a) Some people will tell you that Jesus only died for the elect. But the Gospel of John says that the reason men are not saved is not because Jesus didn't die for them, but only because they refused to believe.
 - (b) It's the same as when Jesus allowed Himself to be limited by the unbelief of the people in His hometown of Nazareth, and the Bible says that He could not do mighty works there.
 - (i) Mark 6:5
- iv) Unbelief is wickedness that comes from the heart, not the head.
 - (1) Hebrews 3:12
- f) The way that we live the Christian life is not by striving, it's not by trying, it is by trusting; which is faith.
 - i) Romans 1:17
- g) We need to understand the importance of faith that lays hold of and receives what grace provides, so we must see what true biblical faith is.

2) THE OBJECT OF FAITH: ALMIGHTY GOD – KNOW HIM

- a) What many people call faith is not faith at all.
 - i) Positive thinking or hoping for the best is not faith.
- b) Faith is no better than its object, and misplaced faith is a terrible thing.
 - i) Faith in faith is just positive thinking.
- c) The object of your faith is Almighty God.
 - i) Romans 10:11
 - ii) It is not faith that moves mountains; it is God that moves mountains.
 - (1) Mark 11:22
- d) If you put faith in faith, in positive thinking, you're going to get discouraged, because it is not true that, "If you believe it, you can achieve it."
- e) Your faith is no better than the object of that faith. Weak faith in God is better than strong faith in anything else.
 - i) Don't think that just because your faith is weak that it won't work.
 - (1) It is not the size of your faith but the object of it that really counts.
 - ii) In the Bible, almost everyone who got a blessing from God had weak faith.
 - (1) A man who came to Jesus wanting help for his demon-possessed son asked Jesus to help him overcome his unbelief.
 - (a) Mark 9:23-24
- f) We are to look to Jesus, the "author and finisher of our faith."



- i) Hebrews 12:1-2
- ii) “Looking unto Jesus” literally means looking away from everything else and looking unto Jesus.
 - (1) Don’t look at others, at yourself, at circumstances; look to Jesus.
 - (2) Don’t look at Satan who tries to get you to doubt your faith; just look to Jesus.
 - (a) Satan will try to get you to look at your faith instead of looking to Jesus.
 - (b) Isaiah 45:22
 - (c) Romans 10:11
- g) The object of your faith is God.
 - i) The ambition of your heart ought to be to know Him.
 - ii) If you look to yourself, you’re going to be discouraged and weak.
 - (1) Put your eyes upon Him.
 - iii) The more you know about Him, the more you’re going to find faith as the byproduct of your heart.
 - iv) Psalm 9:10
 - v) Daniel 11:32
 - vi) Romans 10:11

3) THE ORIGIN OF FAITH: THE WORD OF GOD – HEAR HIM

- a) Romans 10:17
- b) Romans 10:14
- c) Romans 10:8
- d) You must learn to listen to God if you would have faith.
- e) You cannot pray outside the will of God and get your prayer answered. And in order to pray in the will of God, you’ve got to hear the Word of God.
- f) You don’t generate faith, it comes to you from hearing God’s Word.
 - i) Romans 10:17
 - ii) You may exercise faith in the natural realm, such as putting trust in the chair you sit in, a cook who prepares your meal, or when you fly on an airplane.
 - iii) Biblical faith is in the supernatural realm. You don’t work it up, it comes down.
 - 1) 2 Peter 1:1
 - 2) Philippians 1:29
 - iv) Nobody can believe in God unless God enables him to believe.
 - (1) The instrument that God uses to enable you to believe is His Word.
 - v) Faith is not a leap in the dark, it’s a step in the light; you hear from God.
 - (1) Without a word from God, you have no basis for faith.
 - vi) The idea that you can “name it and claim it” is absurd. You can’t claim it unless God names it.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 5:17
- g) Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as “The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
 - i) In the Bible, the word “hope” means bedrock assurance based on the Word of God.
 - (1) In Titus 2:13, the Second Coming of Jesus is called “the blessed hope.” That doesn’t mean the blessed maybe; it means the blessed certainty.
 - (2) Hebrews 6:19 calls hope the anchor of the soul. You don’t put your anchor in a chunk of cloud bank but in something that is strong and solid.



- ii) Some translations give the word “substance” as “assurance,” “confidence,” “guarantee,” or even “the title deed.”
- h) If you don't truly hear God, you'll never have faith.
 - i) Romans 10:17
 - (1) The term used here is for the “rhema” of God, which means, “the communication of the Word of God.” It is God speaking to you out of that Bible.
 - (2) You can hear with your ear everything that is said in a sermon, but still not have faith.
 - (a) The preacher's job is not to just teach you some sermon outline but to get you to listen to God as God speaks to you.
 - ii) Romans 10:14
 - (1) “In Whom” or “Whom” mean that God has to be speaking to you; you have to hear God.
- i) God will take the truths of His Word and apply those to your heart, and you can hear Jesus speaking to you, if you will listen.
 - i) Matthew 11:28

4) THE OBJECTIVE OF FAITH: THE WILL OF GOD – YIELD TO HIM

- a) Why does God use faith?
- b) What is faith all about?
 - i) Faith is not so that we can have something we can put in our pocket to spend for whatever we want: wealth, health, popularity, etc.
 - ii) Faith is not getting man's will done in Heaven; it is getting God's will done on Earth.
 - iii) Faith is not something that we can use for ourselves.
- c) Romans 10:12
 - i) It is the will of God that we be saved.
- d) Romans 10:15
 - i) The preacher is to be sent. He doesn't originate his own message but takes God's message to the people.
- e) The objective of faith is that God's Word which He sends will have its desired effect. It is God's way of getting the things done that He wants done, through us.
 - i) If you make faith some sort of a Midas touch, that makes God your servant. But God is not your servant, you are God's servant.
 - ii) Does this mean that we are hemmed up by the will of God? Yes, just like a minnow hemmed up by the Atlantic Ocean.
 - iii) The will of God doesn't mean fewer blessings for you. The will of God means more blessings for you.
 - (1) You need to find the will of God for your life.
 - (a) 1 John 5:14
 - (i) We can know His will because we have His Word.
 - (ii) We can trust His Word because we know His person.
- f) If you are not interested in the will of God, forget faith.
 - i) If the object of faith is God, then get to know God.
 - ii) If the origin of faith is the Word of God, begin to listen to God.
 - iii) If the objective of faith is the will of God, then submit to God.



- (1) God does not give His faith to rebels.
- (2) Learn to trust the Lord and let God stay in control.

5) THE OPERATION OF FAITH: THE WORK OF GOD – OBEY HIM

- a) The operation of our faith is to obey God.
 - i) This is the work of God.
- b) If you say that you believe God but you don't obey God, you don't really believe Him.
 - i) Faith is belief with legs on it; faith obeys.
 - ii) If we believe, it is because God has enabled us to believe.
 - iii) But if we do not believe, we are the ones held responsible.
 - iv) Romans 10: 17-18
 - v) Romans 10:21
 - (1) We must obey the Gospel.
 - (2) "Disobedience" means not obeying.
 - (3) "Gainsaying" means obstinate.
 - (a) This describes people who just stubbornly refuse to accept and obey the Word of God.
- c) The operation of faith is obedience to God.
 - i) You're not saved by faith "and" works; you're saved by faith "that" works.
 - ii) Faith that changes you completely and causes you to want to obey the Word of God.
 - (1) James 2:26
 - (2) You're not saved because of your works; you work because you're saved.
- d) When God stretches forth His hand, people can say no to Him, which means they've not obeyed the Gospel. When you believe, you obey.

6) CONCLUSION

- a) Faith is a gift of God.
 - i) That does not mean you will automatically believe.
- b) God gives us the opportunity to either refuse or accept this gift.
- c) To receive this wonderful gift, you just put your hand of faith in God's hand of grace, and that's salvation.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Remember that faith means, "Forsaking All I Trust Him."
- e) Repent (turn) from your sins and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, trust Him to save you, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you take God's Word, find Romans 10. In a moment we're going to begin our study in verse 17. Now the book of Romans is the foundation for our faith; it is the constitution of Christianity; it is the solid rock upon which we stand, and the book of Romans tells us, I suppose more than any other book in the Bible, about the grace of God.

I love the word grace. It is a beautiful word. I think the only word more beautiful to me is the name Jesus. But grace, think what a beautiful word that is. And what is grace? Well let's make an acrostic out of grace, GRACE, "God's riches at Christ's expense," GRACE. Have you got that? God's riches at Christ's expense. That means Jesus Christ on the cross, dying in agony and blood for our sins, provides for us all of the riches of God. Romans 10:12, "For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." God's riches at Christ's expense, that's grace.

But listen folks, faith, faith lays hold of what grace provides. Now, without faith there's no way that you can acquire the grace of God. That the grace of God can come into your life only through faith. Ephesians 2 verses 8 and 9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith." Now what is faith, FAITH? "Forsaking all, I trust Him." That's faith. Forsaking all, forsaking my good works, my good intentions, forsaking my sin, forsaking all that I am by nature and by the first birth, I turn my back on that and I take Jesus. Grace, God's riches at Christ's expense. Faith, forsaking all, I trust Him. So when I put my hand of faith in God's hand of grace, that's salvation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith." It is faith that receives what grace provides.

And so when Paul tells us about grace, then he goes on to talk to us about faith and tell us what faith is and how we can understand faith. You see, faith makes God's grace available and real to us. Grace is God's ability. Faith is man's responsibility. Now listen. Grace is God's ability. Faith is man's responsibility.

Jesus died, but we must believe and receive, or the death of Jesus does us no good whatsoever. So it is our responsibility to respond to God's grace. All that we receive, we receive by faith.

Do you want to be saved? Well Romans 5 verse 1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Do you want to be sanctified? "Sanctifying their hearts through faith," the Bible says in Acts 15:9. Do you want your prayers answered? Read Mark 11 verse 24, "Therefore, whatsoever things ye desire when you pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." Do you want to overcome the world? First John 5:4, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It is faith that is the medium of exchange in the kingdom of Heaven. That's the reason the Lord Jesus Christ said in Matthew 9 verse 29, "Be it unto you according to your faith," according to your faith. That is the measure. Your faith is the measure of your victory, your success; all of the things that grace provides, they come to us by faith. So it is so very, very, very, I'll say it one more time, very important that you learn what faith is.

And so Paul now, who has been talking about the grace of God, now talks about faith in that grace beginning in verse 17. So look at it in Romans chapter 10 verses 17 through 21, "So then faith cometh by



hearing and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yea, verily their sound went into all the earth." Now he's quoting the Scripture here, the Psalms that say that the knowledge of the Lord is seen in nature throughout all of the earth. "And their words unto the end of the world. But I say, 'Did not Israel know?' First Moses saith, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.' But Isaiah says very bold, and saith, 'I was found of them that sought Me not; and I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me.' But to Israel He saith, 'All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.'"

Now we're going to think about faith today. Now don't think that this is just a nicety; this is a necessity. And I want to say that lack of faith is not weakness, it is wickedness. And no one who does not believe has the excuse to say they cannot believe, because the Lord has dealt to every man a measure of faith.

Unbelief is a terrible, horrible sin. As a matter of fact, First John chapter 5 verse 10 says, "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar." Unbelief is a slander against the character of God. It was unbelief that led Eve to that sin in the Garden of Eden. It was unbelief that locked the doors of the Promised Land to the children of Israel and caused them to wander in the wilderness. It's unbelief that sends men to Hell.

Listen to this Scripture, John chapter 3 verse 18. Here's the words of Jesus, now listen carefully, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

There're some people who tell you that Jesus only died for the elect, but that's not what the Gospel of John says. It says the only reason men are not saved is not because Jesus didn't die for them, but because they didn't believe in Him. "He that believeth in Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed." Jesus died, salvation is there, but they refuse to believe and therefore, they are not saved.

It's the same thing when Jesus was in His hometown of Nazareth. And the Bible says in Matthew 13 verse 58 that, "Jesus could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief." He, the Almighty, the Sovereign, limited Himself by their unbelief. He allowed their unbelief to keep Him from doing mighty works there. "He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief."

"Do you mean to say that He was not sovereign, He's not all powerful, He's not all glorious?" Of course He is, He's all of those things. But He has said, "Be it unto you according to your faith." He limited Himself. He allowed Himself to be limited by their unbelief. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed."

Unbelief is not mere weakness; unbelief is wickedness. Unbelief never comes out of the head. People don't have intellectual problems. It may show up as an intellectual problem, but unbelief comes out of the heart. The Bible says in Hebrews 3:12, "Beware, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief." And over there in Romans chapter 1 and verse 17, the Bible says, "The just shall live by faith." The way that we live the Christian life is not by striving, it's not by trying, it is by trusting. "The just shall live by faith."

Now I'm saying, all of that's just the front porch to get us into the house. All of what I'm saying is the importance of faith that lays hold and receives what grace provides. I want us to see what true biblical faith is.



And the very first thing I want you to see is what I want to call **the object of faith**. What do you place your faith in? That's so very important, because so many people call things faith that's not faith at all. Some people say, "Well, just believe, you know, it's positive thinking." Well I like positive thinking. I'm very much in favor of positive thinking. But positive thinking is not faith. Some people think hoping for the best is faith, or giving it your best or whatever. They have all kinds of ideas about what faith is. But faith is no better than its object.

I was in the Atlanta airport coming to Memphis. They called the flight. I got up, gave my ticket, along with Joyce, to the lady. We went through the thing, went to seat 15 D and E and sat down. After a while somebody else came and said, "You're in our seat." I said, "No, here we are, there we are, that's us." Then after a while I heard somebody say on the intercom, "Would Mr. and Mrs. Rogers please identify themselves?" 'Said, "How'd they know I'm on this plane?" And so I pushed the little thing, and after a while the, the lady came to me. She said, "Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, you're supposed to be going to Memphis but this airplane's going to Shreveport." Now friend, I didn't want to go to Shreveport. Now I had a lot of faith in that airplane, I had a lot of faith in the ticket system and the person who took my tickets and so forth, but folks, all that faith didn't do me one whit of good if I'm on the wrong airplane, isn't that right?

Now misplaced faith is a terrible thing. You've put faith in the wrong place. You've got to put your faith in the right place and, you see, the Bible never tells us to put faith in faith. That's just positive thinking. What is the object of our faith? The object of our faith is Almighty God. Now, you're in chapter 10. Go back to Romans 10 verse 11 if you will, "For the Scripture saith, 'Whosoever believeth,'" now watch this, "'on Him!'" underscore that, "'on Him,'" "'on Him shall not be ashamed.'" The object of your faith is Almighty God. There's nothing mystical or magical about believing. Faith is no better than its object.

Now listen to me very carefully. Some people say faith moves mountains. That is not true. It is God that moves mountains. Pay attention. It is not faith that moves mountains; it is God that moves mountains. The Bible, in Mark 11 verse 22, Jesus in that context, "Jesus answered them and said, 'Have faith in God.'" In God. Your faith is no better than its object. So many people just misplace this. Faith in faith is nothing but positive thinking.

A little boy came home from school and his dad said, "How'd you do on the test today?" He said, "Well, I think I flunked my math test." The father said, "You need to be more positive than that." He said, "Okay, I'm positive I flunked my math test."

Positive thinking is not faith. Faith in faith is not faith. You've got to have faith in God. If you put faith in faith, faith in positive thinking, you're going to get discouraged. There're people who'll tell you that if you believe it you can achieve it and all of this, and they tell salesmen this, and they tell athletes this, and they tell all these people this, but that's just simply not true. That is not true. Just because you believe it, you can't achieve it. And just because you think you can do it, you cannot do it. And after a while you're going to find yourself so discouraged, and Satan is going to say to you, "You really don't have what it takes."

Now listen to me, your faith is no better than the object of that faith. Weak faith in the right object is better than misplaced faith in any object. Weak faith in God is better than strong faith in anything else. Don't get the idea that because your faith is weak that it won't work. You may be afraid to fly on an airplane at all, but if you get on it, you've exercised faith in that airplane and you're just as safe as the



pilot and the steward. It's a weak faith. Faith is what counts, it's not the size of your faith, it's the object of your faith that really counts. So many people fail to understand this.

If you'll look in the Bible, almost everybody who got a blessing from God had weak faith. There're a few had strong faith, but most of them had weak faith. There was a man whose son was demon-possessed. And he came to Jesus and he said, "Master, if you can do anything for my boy, please do it." In Mark 9 verses 23 and 24 Jesus said, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Do you know what that man said? He said, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief." Have you ever been there? We all have. "Lord, I believe, I have faith. But Lord, help my unbelief." You know, Spurgeon said, "A trembling hand can receive a gorgeous, wonderful gift." It's not faith in faith, it's not. It's not the quality of your faith; it's the object of your faith that really counts.

Again, the Bible says in Hebrews chapter 12 verse 2 we're to be, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Look to Jesus, the object of your faith. He is the author; He is the finisher of your faith. It is faith in Him. That's the object of your faith. If you don't have your faith in the right place, what good is your faith? You're going to Shreveport, friend, when you ought to be going to Memphis. You've got to put your faith in the right place. That's just all there is to it. "Looking unto Jesus," Hebrews 12 verses 1 and 2. And that word, "Looking unto Jesus," literally means looking away from everything else and looking unto Jesus.

Now, the reason some folks don't have faith is they have their eyes on everything else other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't look at others, look to Jesus. Don't look at yourself, look to Jesus. Don't look at circumstances, look to Jesus. Don't look at Satan, look to Jesus. Look away from everything else. That's literally what the Greek word means when it says, "Looking unto Jesus." Literally translated it means, "Looking away from everything else and looking to Jesus." That's the reason why I said faith is what? "Forsaking all, I trust Him." The object of your faith must be God. Your faith is no better than its object. Looking unto Jesus.

You know what the devil will do to you? Let me tell you how, what a dirty devil the devil is. The devil will want to make you doubt your salvation, and here's what he'll say to you, "You say you trust Jesus? Well just how strong is your faith? Maybe your faith is not strong enough to save you. Maybe you don't have good enough faith; maybe you don't have strong enough faith."

And the first thing you know, you'll get to examining your faith. You open up your innards and pull out your faith and look it all over and examine it. And you say, "Well I wonder if I really have that saving faith?" You know what the devil's trying to get you to do? The devil is trying to get you to look at your faith rather than looking to Jesus.

Now listen, don't put faith in faith. Put faith in Jesus. When the devil used to pull that trick on me. He used to say, "Well, Adrian, how do you know that you really believe enough?" I just learned how to turn the tables on him. I say, "You know, devil, you're right, my faith is weak, but Jesus is wonderful. I'm not putting my faith in my faith. I'm putting my faith in Jesus." Jesus never said, "Look at your look." He says, "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." You'll find that in Isaiah 45:22. Don't look at your look; don't put faith in faith, put faith in Jesus. Faith in faith is positive thinking. Faith in Jesus is salvation.

Now the object of faith is God. So what should be your ambition, then? To know God, to know God.



That's the reason the Bible says we're to be, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith." You see, if you look to yourself, you're going to be discouraged and weak. Put your eyes upon Him. The Scripture saith in Romans 9:33, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed." I hope this is getting through to you. Your great need today is to learn of Him, to come to know Him.

If the object of your faith is God, then the ambition of your heart ought to be to know Him. The more you know about Him, the more you're going to find faith as the byproduct of your heart. When you look to Jesus, when you discover the God of the Bible, when you come to see Him, you're going to find out that faith is axiomatic in your heart and in your life.

Let me give you a verse. Psalm 9 verse 10, "And they that know Thy name," that is, the character of God, "will put their trust in Thee." Daniel 11 and verse 32, "And they that know their God shall be strong and shall do exploits." And so, the object of faith is God Himself. Not positive thinking, not your own ambitions, not your own will, not your own intention, just know God. "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee." Romans 10 verse 11, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed."

Now here's the second thing about biblical faith. Not only the object of it, but **the origin of it**. Now if the object of this faith is to trust Him, then you've got to hear from Him, so the origin of your faith is the Word of God. The object of your faith is God Himself. You trust Him. But the origin of that faith is to hear Him.

Now look if you will in Romans 10 verse 17 "So then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Go back to Romans 10 verse 14, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" It's a very logical question. Go back up to Romans 10 verse 8, "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith," the word of faith.

Now the object of faith is God Himself, so you must know Him. But the origin of faith is the Word of that God, you must hear Him. You must learn to listen to God if you would have faith. You see, you cannot pray outside the will of God and get your prayer answered. And in order to pray in the will of God, you've got to hear the Word of God.

Now where does this faith come from? You don't generate faith. You don't just clench your fist, grit your teeth, and say, "I am going to believe." "Faith cometh," look in Romans 10 verse 17, "Faith cometh by hearing." That is, it comes from outside of you. You don't generate that faith.

Now you can have natural faith in the natural realm; we all live by natural faith. You're putting faith in the chair that you're sitting in right now. You're putting faith in the engineer that put this roof over us. When you go to the restaurant, you're putting faith in the cook. That's natural faith. We all live by faith every day in chairs, planes, food. Ron Dunn said this, he says the doctor tells us that we have a disease that we've never heard of, writes a prescription that we cannot read for a medicine whose name we cannot pronounce, which we take to a druggist that we do not know, who gives us a bottle of liquid which tastes like poison, which we take and go back for more. That's faith, but that's faith in the natural realm.

But we're not talking about that. We're talking about biblical faith that's in the supernatural realm. You don't generate that. God gives, you don't work it up, it comes down. Peter said in Second Peter chapter 1 verse 1, he talks about those who have obtained like precious faith. And then in Philippians



chapter 1 verse 29, “For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” That is, the believing on Him is given to you. Nobody can believe in God unless God enables Him to believe.

Now listen to me. The only way that you can believe in God is to hear from God, and God must enable you to believe. And the instrument that God uses to enable you to believe is His Word. Faith is not a leap in the dark; it’s a step in the light. You hear from God. But without a word from God, listen to me very carefully, without a word from God you have no basis for faith. There’s some people today who say, “You name it and claim it.” That is absurd. You can’t claim it unless God names it. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”

Now put in your margin Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 1. Here is a description of faith, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.”

Think about that word hope. What does that word hope mean? It doesn’t mean maybe, not in the Bible. It may mean it in modern English, but in the Bible the word hope means bedrock assurance, and that assurance is based on the Word of God. The Second Coming of Jesus is called what? The blessed hope. That doesn’t mean the blessed maybe, it means the blessed certainty, and faith is the substance of things hoped for. That is bedrock assurance based on the Word of God.

Again the Bible calls hope the anchor of the soul. Well, friend, you don’t put your anchor in a chunk of cloud bank; you put your anchor in something that is strong and solid. So now pay attention, now, because we’re going to learn something about hope. Hope is bedrock assurance.

Now look at the word substance. The Bible says, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.” I looked this up in some different translations, studied some different translations. One gives it for the word substance, it gives the word assurance. Another gives the word confidence. Another gives the word guarantee. Another gives it, and I love this, “The title deed.” What happens is this, that we have bedrock assurance, we have substance, we have the title deed, according to the Word of God.

Point I’m making is this, that the object of faith is God; the origin of faith is the Word of God. If you don’t hear from God, you’ll never have faith. Well, let me just put it this way; if you don’t hear God, not just hear from God, if you don’t hear God, you’ll never have faith. That’s the reason I asked you to pray at the beginning of this service, “Help me not to hear Adrian, help me to hear God. God, help him to be the Western Union boy, as he brings the Word.” But it is the Word of God that’s going to bring faith in your heart.

Now look in Romans 10 verse 17, “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God,” that is hearing the Word of God. The word that is translated word there is not the word logos, which means the revelation of the Bible, like we call the Bible the Word of God. That’s the logos. But it’s a different word. It’s the word rhema. “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the rhema of God.” And that word means, “The communication of the Word of God,” not just the Word of God. I don’t mean when I say, “Just the Word of God,” to deprecate the Word of God, but it is not the Bible that you hold in your hand that’s going to give you faith. It is God speaking to you out of that Bible. Not the logos that you have in your hand. That is the Word of God, that is. But you need to have God speak to you. You need a rhema, a communication of the Word of God.



You can hear with your ear everything that I say this morning and not have faith, but, oh, if God speaks to your heart! You've got to hear God; you've got to get a communication of that Word from God. And my job is not to just teach you some sermon outline. My job is to get you to listen to God as God speaks to you. You've got to hear from God, you've got to hear more than a sermon, you've got to hear more than a pastor, you've got to hear God.

Look in Romans 10 verse 14, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Now look at that little phrase, "in." The New American Standard gives it this way, "How shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" Doesn't say, "In whom," but, "Whom they have not heard."

What is the difference? Well, they basically mean the same thing, but it means that God has to be speaking to you. You've got to hear God today. I hope that you go away from here not just simply hearing Adrian, but that you've heard God, because faith comes when you hear God. God speaks to you. There is a *rhema*. God takes the Word of God and the truths of the Word of God, and God applies those to your heart, and God is speaking to you. You must hear Jesus today. You must hear Jesus say to you today, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." You can find that in Matthew chapter 11 verse 28. He is speaking to your heart today, if you will listen.

Now here's the third thing I want you to see. I want you to see not only the object of our faith, which is God Himself, the origin of our faith, which is to hear from God and to get a Word from God, but I want you to hear also, friend, **the objective of our faith**. Why does God use faith? What is faith all about? Is faith something that you can put in your pocket to spend for whatever you want? Can you just say, "Well, I want a bigger house, I have faith so I'll have a bigger house." Or, "I have faith so I'll get well. I have faith so I'll have friends. I'll have faith so I can get married. I'll have faith so I can have a Cadillac. I'll have faith so I," no, no, no, no, no, no. Faith is not getting man's will done in Heaven. It is getting God's will done on Earth

Now it's very, very important that you see this, because so many of us think that faith is something that we can use for ourselves. Look if you will in Romans 10 verse 12, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is, is rich unto all that call upon Him." Now, that's the will of God, that you be saved. Go back if you will, down to verse 15 and look in verse 15 of this same chapter, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

Now the preacher is to be sent. The preacher doesn't originate his own message. I don't sit back there in my study or in my study at the house and say, "Now what do I want these folks to know? What do I think will be good ideas for them?" No, I am to be a messenger boy with beautiful feet, running with glad tidings. I have been sent where God says, "Go tell them this."

Now we have workers here at our church who buy things for the church, cleaning fluids and paper goods and so forth. Well we don't just say, "Go buy whatever you think you want or whatever you think that we need." There is a requisition, a purchase order, something that is given so that they come back with the right stuff. You see there, they don't originate all of that. The object of somebody who goes to the supply store with a purchase order is to get what the leader says we need, what the administrator says we must have. And faith is God's way of getting the things done that He wants done through us. And that's the objective of faith.



Now if you make faith some sort of a Midas touch, that makes God your servant. But God is not your servant, you are God's servant. And again, faith is not getting man's will done in Heaven. It is getting God's will done on Earth. And you say, "Well wait a minute, Adrian. You mean to say that I am hemmed up by the will of God?" Yep, just like a minnow hemmed up by the Atlantic Ocean. The will of God doesn't mean fewer blessings for you. The will of God means more blessings for you, but the objective of faith is that God's Word that He sends will have its effect. God's order form will be done, and God will do it through us.

So what you need to do is to find the will of God, because the Bible says in First John 5:14, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, if we ask Him anything according to His will, He hears us." Well how do we know His will? We know His Word. Well how do we trust His Word? We know His person.

So the object of faith is God Himself. The origin of faith is the Word of God. The objective of faith is the will of God. Now if you're not interested in the will of God, forget faith. So what should you do? If the object of faith is God, get to know God. If the origin of faith is the Word of God, begin to listen to God. If the objective of faith is the will of God, then submit to God! God doesn't give His faith to rebels. Friend, learn to trust the Lord. Let God stay in control.

Now here's the final thing and we'll just wrap this up. What is the operation of faith? **The operation of faith** is to obey God. Now pay attention. Look, the object of faith is God, so know Him. The origin of faith is the Word of God, so hear Him. The, the objective of faith is the will of God, so yield to Him. And then the operation of faith is the work of God, so obey Him.

Now watch this. If you say that you believe God but you don't obey God, you don't really believe Him. Faith is belief with legs on it. Faith obeys. Now if we believe, obviously it is because God has enabled us to believe. But if we don't believe, we're the ones held responsible.

Look if you will at this. Look if you will in Romans 10 verses 17 and 18, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, 'Have they not heard?' Yes verily, their sound went out unto all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world." But skip down to verse 21, "But to Israel He saith, 'All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.'" Now they have not all obeyed the Gospel. You must obey the Gospel. "All day long," God says to Israel, "Have I stretched out My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Now what does that mean? Disobedient. Well you know what disobedience is; just not obeying.

What about gainsaying? We don't use that word very much today, but it means obstinate. It means people who just refuse the Word of God. Here's the Word of God, and it goes forth, and God is stretching out His hands. There's some people say, "Oh, well, God just calls just some and when God just calls some, they're going to come and ain't nothing can stop it."

You better read the Bible. Friend, He says, "All day long have I stretched out My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." God is stretching out His hands, but they wouldn't believe. They refused. Gainsaying means that they are not only disobedient, but they are obstinate. They say no! They take the Word of God, and they parade it past the judgment bar of their mind, and they make a jury of themselves and they say, "Oh, no, I don't think so. I'm not going to obey that."



Friend, the operation of faith is obedience to God. You're not saved by faith and works; you're saved by faith that works. And if it hasn't changed your life, if it doesn't get down into shoe leather, if it doesn't get down into your heart, if it doesn't make you a different person, if it doesn't cause you to obey the Word of God, don't tell me you have faith, don't tell me you're going to Heaven. "Faith without works is dead," that's what James tells us in James 2 verse 26.

Now you're not saved because of your works, you work because you're saved. But God stretches forth His hand, and people can say no to Him, and if they say no to Him, God says, "I stretched out My hands all day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people." They've not all obeyed the Gospel. So when you believe, you obey. Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

So have you followed me? The object of faith is God; know Him. The origin of faith is the Word of God; hear Him. The objective of faith is the will of God; yield to Him. It is Heaven's way of getting God's will done on Earth. And then the operation of faith is to obey God. Say, "Yes, Lord." It is, it is belief with legs on it.

Now that brings me to one last thing. You say, "Pastor, is faith the gift of God?" Yes, faith is the gift of God. "Does that mean if God gives it, that I'm going to automatically believe? No. Breathing is a gift of God. God gives me lungs and God gives me air. That was a gift from God, that was a gift from God, but I can smother if I want to. Foolish. Breathing is a gift of God. You can smother. Faith is a gift of God.

God gives you His Word! And God gives you His Spirit! But then God says, "Whosoever will may come." "All day long have I stretched out My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." So it's time right now for you to do the most wonderful thing that you could possibly do, and that is to trust this great God for salvation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith." You put your hand of faith in God's hand of grace and that's salvation.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. While heads are bowed and eyes are closed, would you pray for those who may not yet know Jesus? And precious friend, right now, right now I want to lead you in a prayer. If you don't know Jesus, pray this prayer, "God, I believe that You are the Almighty. I want to put my faith in You. I believe the Bible is Your Word and You've spoken to me out of Your Word today. And I know, Lord, that You want to save me and I yield myself to that today. And now I will obey You by confessing You as my Lord and Savior right now." Father, I pray that many will come to Jesus. In His dear name I pray, Amen.



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