**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Faith: What Is It and How to Have It |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Romans 10:17-21 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2069 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. 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.
   2. 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.”
      1. That means Jesus Christ on the cross, dying in agony and blood for our sins, provided for us all of the riches of God.
      2. Romans 10:12
   3. But you need faith in order to lay hold of what grace provides.
      1. It is only through faith that the grace of God can come into your life.
      2. Ephesians 2:8-9
      3. 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.
      4. When you put your hand of faith in God’s hand of grace, that’s salvation.
      5. 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.
      6. All that we receive, we receive by faith.
         1. Do you want to be saved?
            1. Romans 5:1
         2. Do you want to be sanctified?
            1. Acts 15:9
         3. Do you want your prayers answered?
            1. 1 John 5:4
         4. Do you want to overcome the world?
            1. Mark 11:24
      7. 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.
   4. 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.
      1. Romans 10:17-21
   5. Faith is not just a nicety; it is a necessity. And lack of faith (unbelief) is not weakness, it is wickedness.
      1. 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
      2. 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.
      3. Unbelief sends men to Hell.
         1. John 3:18
            1. 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.
            2. 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.

Mark 6:5

* + 1. Unbelief is wickedness that comes from the heart, not the head.
       1. Hebrews 3:12
  1. The way that we live the Christian life is not by striving, it’s not by trying, it is by trusting; which is faith.
     1. Romans 1:17
  2. 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.

1. THE OBJECT OF FAITH: ALMIGHTY GOD – KNOW HIM
   1. What many people call faith is not faith at all.
      1. Positive thinking or hoping for the best is not faith.
   2. Faith is no better than its object, and misplaced faith is a terrible thing.
      1. Faith in faith is just positive thinking.
   3. The object of your faith is Almighty God.
      1. Romans 10:11
      2. It is not faith that moves mountains; it is God that moves mountains.
         1. Mark 11:22
   4. 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.”
   5. Your faith is no better than the object of that faith. Weak faith in God is better than strong faith in anything else.
      1. 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.
      2. 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.
            1. Mark 9:23-24
   6. We are to look to Jesus, the “author and finisher of our faith.”
      1. Hebrews 12:1-2
      2. “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.
            1. Satan will try to get you to look at your faith instead of looking to Jesus.
            2. Isaiah 45:22
            3. Romans 10:11
   7. The object of your faith is God.
      1. The ambition of your heart ought to be to know Him.
      2. If you look to yourself, you’re going to be discouraged and weak.
         1. Put your eyes upon Him.
      3. The more you know about Him, the more you’re going to find faith as the byproduct of your heart.
      4. Psalm 9:10
      5. Daniel 11:32
      6. Romans 10:11
2. THE ORIGIN OF FAITH: THE WORD OF GOD – HEAR HIM
   1. Romans 10:17
   2. Romans 10:14
   3. Romans 10:8
   4. You must learn to listen to God if you would have faith.
   5. 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.
   6. You don’t generate faith, it comes to you from hearing God’s Word.
      1. Romans 10:17
      2. 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.
      3. Biblical faith is in the supernatural realm. You don’t work it up, it comes down.
3. 2 Peter 1:1
4. Philippians 1:29
   * 1. 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.
     2. 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.
     3. 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
   1. Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as “*The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*.”
      1. 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.
      2. Some translations give the word “substance” as “assurance,” “confidence,” “guarantee,” or even “the title deed.”
   2. If you don’t truly hear God, you’ll never have faith.
      1. 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.
            1. 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.
      2. Romans 10:14
         1. “In Whom” or “Whom” mean that God has to be speaking to you; you have to hear God.
   3. 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.
      1. Matthew 11:28
5. THE OBJECTIVE OF FAITH: THE WILL OF GOD – YIELD TO HIM
   1. Why does God use faith?
   2. What is faith all about?
      1. 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.
      2. Faith is not getting man’s will done in Heaven; it is getting God’s will done on Earth.
      3. Faith is not something that we can use for ourselves.
   3. Romans 10:12
      1. It is the will of God that we be saved.
   4. Romans 10:15
      1. The preacher is to be sent. He doesn’t originate his own message but takes God’s message to the people.
   5. 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.
      1. 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.
      2. Does this mean that we are hemmed up by the will of God? Yes, just like a minnow hemmed up by the Atlantic Ocean.
      3. 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.
            1. 1 John 5:14

We can know His will because we have His Word.

We can trust His Word because we know His person.

* 1. If you are not interested in the will of God, forget faith.
     1. If the object of faith is God, then get to know God.
     2. If the origin of faith is the Word of God, begin to listen to God.
     3. 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.

1. THE OPERATION OF FAITH: THE WORK OF GOD – OBEY HIM
   1. The operation of our faith is to obey God.
      1. This is the work of God.
   2. If you say that you believe God but you don’t obey God, you don’t really believe Him.
      1. Faith is belief with legs on it; faith obeys.
      2. If we believe, it is because God has enabled us to believe.
      3. But if we do not believe, we are the ones held responsible.
      4. Romans 10: 17-18
      5. Romans 10:21
         1. We must obey the Gospel.
         2. “Disobedience” means not obeying.
         3. “Gainsaying” means obstinate.
            1. This describes people who just stubbornly refuse to accept and obey the Word of God.
   3. The operation of faith is obedience to God.
      1. You’re not saved by faith “and” works; you’re saved by faith “that” works.
      2. 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.
   4. 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.
2. CONCLUSION
   1. Faith is a gift of God.
      1. That does not mean you will automatically believe.
   2. God gives us the opportunity to either refuse or accept this gift.
   3. To receive this wonderful gift, you just put your hand of faith in God's hand of grace, and that's salvation.
   4. Call upon Jesus today. Remember that faith means, “Forsaking All I Trust Him.”
   5. 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.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16