



Faith Is Not Optional

Preview

Today's topic is faith.

Praise

Share a testimony about God honoring your faith and answering a prayer. (*Example: share a time when you were sick, had the church pray for you, and you were healed.*) Ask if anyone else has a testimony they want to share of how God answered their prayer.

Parable

All of us have a desire for someone to believe in us...to believe in our ability to accomplish something great. Have you ever had a dream or desire to do something or become someone great? For example, to be a doctor or maybe even the President of the United States? You want people to support you and say, "I believe in you! You CAN do it!"

God is the same way. He wants us to believe in His ability to do great things. If we're sick, He wants us to believe He can heal us. If we have a financial need, He wants us to believe He will provide. Jesus became excited at the faith the Centurion displayed. Jesus proclaimed, "I have not found any greater faith, not even in Israel!" in Matthew 8. The Centurion not only believed Jesus could heal his servant, but he also believed all Jesus had to do was just speak the word and his servant would be healed. He wants us to believe He is able to do great and mighty things. Having faith in God's ability is not optional.

Present

Hebrews 11:6 explains to us that without faith it is impossible to please God. God wants us to believe in Him; to believe that He is able and willing to do exceedingly, abundantly above all we could ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

The next part of Hebrews 11:6 reads, "He that comes to God must believe that He is..." He is what? He is our healer! He is our provider! He is our comforter! He is our protector! He is everything we need!



The last part of this verse reads, "He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." We seek for Him by studying the Bible and by praying daily. God wants us to have more than a religion. He wants us to have a relationship with Him. He wants us to know more about Him.

Faith brings peace—because you know that the One who is greater than any situation you may face is in control. So keep your eyes on Jesus! Don't let circumstances or negative conversations (faith squashers) diminish your faith. Sometimes you have to encourage yourself in the Lord by quoting Scripture verses such as, "God's Word says if I pray the prayer of faith, the sick shall recover" or "God's Word says my God shall supply ALL my needs."

Pactice

God has given each of us a measure of faith (Romans 12:3). We need to build on it, exercise our faith, and give faith a chance to work. Start with the small things. When God answers, it builds up your faith to trust Him for something greater.

How can you exercise your faith? Talk about His wondrous works (Psalm 105:2). Testify. Tell others about what God has done and is doing. We all have testimonies—share them! By doing this we build each other's faith. Read books or listen to testimonies of what God has done in other people's lives. Read the Bible daily. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17) As we learn more about God, our faith will grow because we will understand how great He is!

Pray

Ask God to increase your faith. Praise God for prayers He has answered. Affirm in prayer that you believe He is great and believe He is able to do great and mighty things.

Plus

Your challenge this week is to exercise your faith by sharing a testimony with someone of a prayer God answered, or by reading a book written by a missionary (missionary books are filled with faith-building stories). I also challenge you to seek out and read stories of miracles performed in the Bible. As you read, keep in mind that God has not changed. The miracles that took place back then are still available for us today.