

Cultivating Faith

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

- I. **Faith asks, seeks, and persists. “Will He find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:1-8)?**
 - A. The woman persisted, not against the adversary, but with the judge (Luke 18:3). There is a back-and-forth nature in legal proceedings. Note how Abraham petitioned the Lord (Genesis 18:16-33).
 - B. Abraham had the “shameless audacity” of the widow (Luke 18:1-8) and of the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5-8). Believing in the goodness of the Father causes prayer to be a relational exchange of love, listening, and tenacity (Luke 11:9-13).
 - C. The foundation of this access to God is the finished work of our great High Priest, Jesus (Hebrews 4:14-16).
- II. **Faith sees the invisible and the good hand of God in everyday life and recognizes divine appointments (Hebrews 11:1-3).**
 - A. In Jewish thought there are two types of eyes: the good eye (*ayin tov*) and the bad eye (*ayin ra*). Jesus spoke of this in Matthew 6:22-23. “When we see things from the perspective of the good eye, we can perceive the positive, the good, and, most importantly, the hand of God in all things. When we view things through the ‘bad eye,’ we see problems pain, and the bad in everything” (*The God of the Way*, *Kathie Lee Gifford and Rabbi Jason Sobel*).
 - B. The faith that made Jesus marvel (Matthew 8:5-13)
 - C. “Daughter, your faith has healed you” (Mark 5:22-34).
 - D. Jesus and His Father are always working, and so are we. Love makes clear what the Father is doing (John 5:16-20). Love gives us our “Jesus eyes.” The powerful fruit of the love-faith connection (John 14:12-14).
 - E. Giving thanks in all circumstances, and being thankful for God’s answers, give us an amazing awareness of recognizing God in even the most difficult of circumstances (I Thessalonians 5:16-21).
 - F. “Wisdom” and “wisdom paths” are there for the asking. Taking a trip with God (James 1:4-8)
- III. **Faith responds to the high callings and purposes of God for our lives (Ephesians 2:10; Psalm 139:16-18).**
 - A. God entrusts us with the stewardship of spiritual gifts (I Peter 4:10-11; Isaiah 6:8).
 - B. An entire generation died out, because they would not fulfill God’s purpose for their lives. Joshua and Caleb had a different spirit (Numbers 14:5-9, 20-24, 29-31; Joshua 14:7-14; 17:14-18).
- IV. **Faith rests (Mark 4:35-41).**
 - A. “Do you still have no faith” (Mark 4:40)?
 - B. Jesus promises to get us to the other side (Hebrews 13:5-6).

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April 7, 2024*