

Construction in Progress

Lesson 1: BUILDING FAITH

Introduction

- Let's share the story from Mark 9:14-29
 - A man from the crowd brings his suffering son. (v. 17-18)
 - The boy's symptoms resemble that of epilepsy.
 - Jesus' disciples could not help him.
 - Jesus responded, "O, _____ generation, how long shall I be with you!" (v. 19)
 - Jesus said, "All things are possible to the one who _____." (v.23)
 - The man replied with tears in his eye, "Lord, I believe, _____ my unbelief!" (v. 24)
- The origin or source of our faith is the word:
"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)
 - The guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13)
 - Strengthen and settle the weak spirit (1 Peter 5:10)

I. Where We Start

- a. Most of us grew up attending Sunday church services
 - i. We learned the old bible stories at an early age:
 1. God made the world; Noah built the ark; The man who climbed the sycamore tree
 2. What bible story do you remember most learning as a child? _____
- b. Many of us obeyed the gospel and were baptized at an early age.
 - i. It's a great blessing to see our own children baptized into Christ.
 - ii. **Question for Discussion:** Could it be that many are baptized too soon before realizing the levity of what it means to become a Christian and thus fail to develop their faith?
- c. **Things We Must Understand:**
 - i. The "**oneness**" of the gospel (Ephesians 4:4-6)

(4) There is _____ body and _____ Spirit, just as you were called in _____ hope of your calling; (5) _____ Lord, _____ faith, _____ baptism; (6) _____ God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- ii. The definition of faith and it's vital importance to the Christian (Hebrews 11:1, 6)

(1) Now _____ is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

(6) But without _____ it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

iii. We now serve Christ and not ourselves (Galatians 2:20)

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer _____ who live, but _____ lives in me; and the life which _____ now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

iv. Confession of Christ is the foundation on which the church was founded (Matthew 16:18)

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build _____ church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

v. Jesus Christ, not men, built the church. (1 Corinthians 3:11)

For no other _____ can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

II. How We Grow

- a. It's been said that a person either has faith or they don't.
- b. Jesus divided humankind into two groups...

And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. (Matthew 25:33)

- c. Children of God and children of the devil.

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:10)

- d. If we are a person of faith, then we must be diligent to add to it. (2 Peter 1:5-8)
- e. Abraham, considered to be a hero of faith (Hebrews 11:8-10)
 - i. He did not become stagnate in his faith even after receiving the promise of God.

He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was _____ in faith, giving glory to God. (Romans 4:20)

- f. So how do we make our faith grow?
 - i. Be connected to the source (Romans 10:17)
 - ii. Continued and constant study of the bible will remind us that:
 - 1. God is Powerful**
 - 2. God is Almighty**
 - 3. God is All Sufficient**
 - iii. In God's discourse with Job, the Lord describes His Awesomeness! (Job 38:1-7)

- g. God protected David (1 Samuel 17:34-36) and Daniel from the lions (Daniel 6:22)
 - i. Surely He will protect us from the ultimate predator...

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring _____, seeking whom he may devour. (9) Resist him, _____ in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

- ii. Equipping ourselves with a knowledge of God will certainly build our faith.

III. Bible Study = Faith Building

- a. Bible study reminds us of **God's love** toward us.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should _____ but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

- i. God loved Israel, even with all her misbehavior (Malachi 1:2)
- ii. God loves us, despite that we are undeserving.

(6) For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the _____. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. (8) But God demonstrates His own _____ toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8)

- b. Bible study reminds us of **God's exactness** (strictness).
 - i. The example of Balaam (Numbers 22-24)
 - ii. God is exact in His expectations.
 - iii. He expects us to move forward, not looking back.

But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

- iv. Holding on to the past will certainly keep us from moving forward with the construction of our faith!

IV. The "Finished" Product

- a. By enduring trials we can be "perfect"

But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be _____ and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:4)

- b. The journey of spiritual maturity is never complete...

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. (Philippians 3:12)

- c. We must continue to engage in faith building activities:
 - i. **Consistency** in worship and service (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - ii. **Daily** cross-bearing (Luke 9:23)
 - iii. **Fellowship** with God's people (Acts 2:42)
 - iv. **Sharing** the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16)
 - v. **Demonstrating** faith through doing (James 2:17-18)
 - vi. **Commitment** for a life-time (2 Timothy 4:7)